



This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

### **Usage guidelines**

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

- + *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.
- + *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.
- + *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.
- + *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

### **About Google Book Search**

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at <http://books.google.com/>



THE  
MOHADDETYN



IN  
THE



PALACE OF GHELZIRE

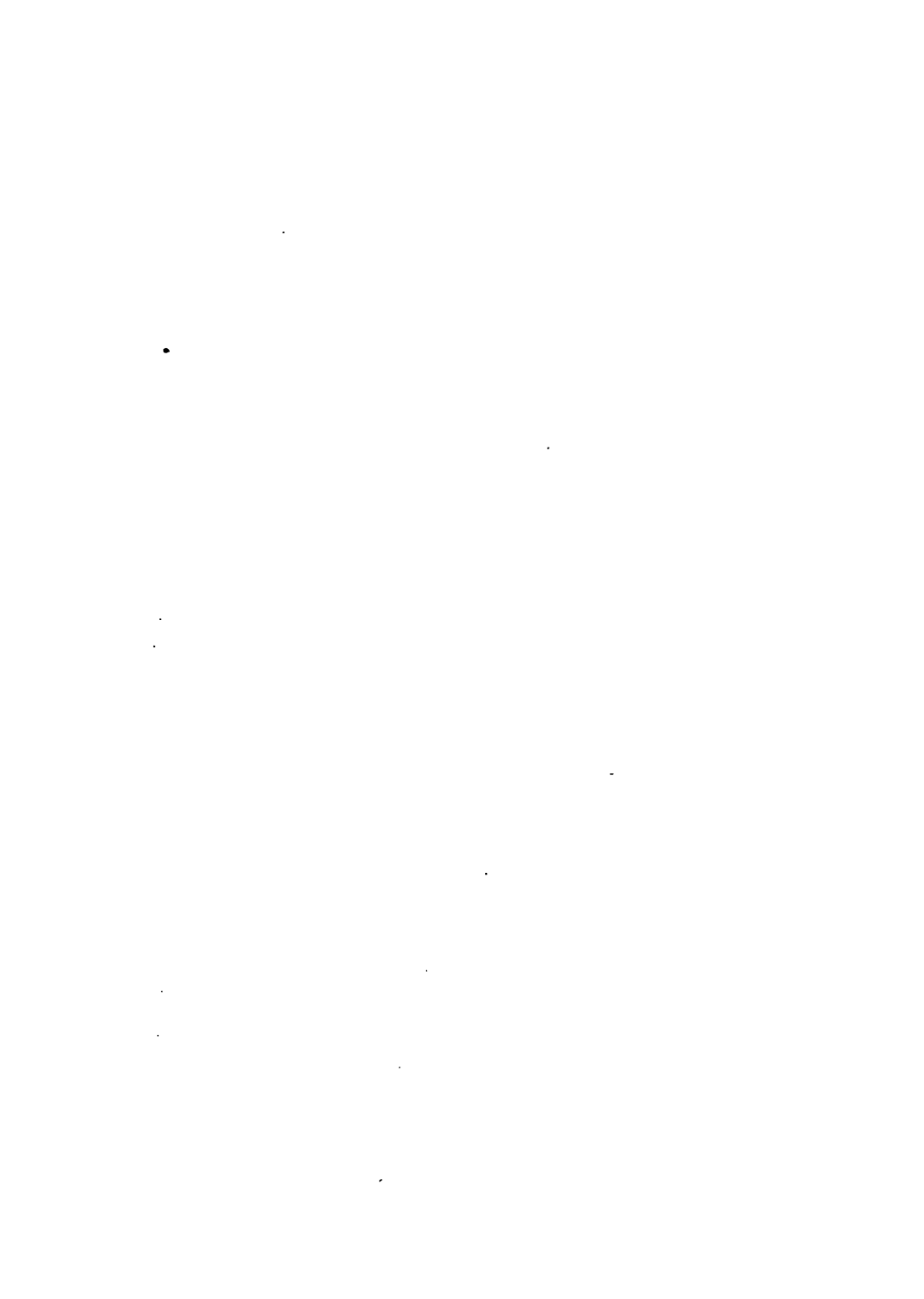




600020895U



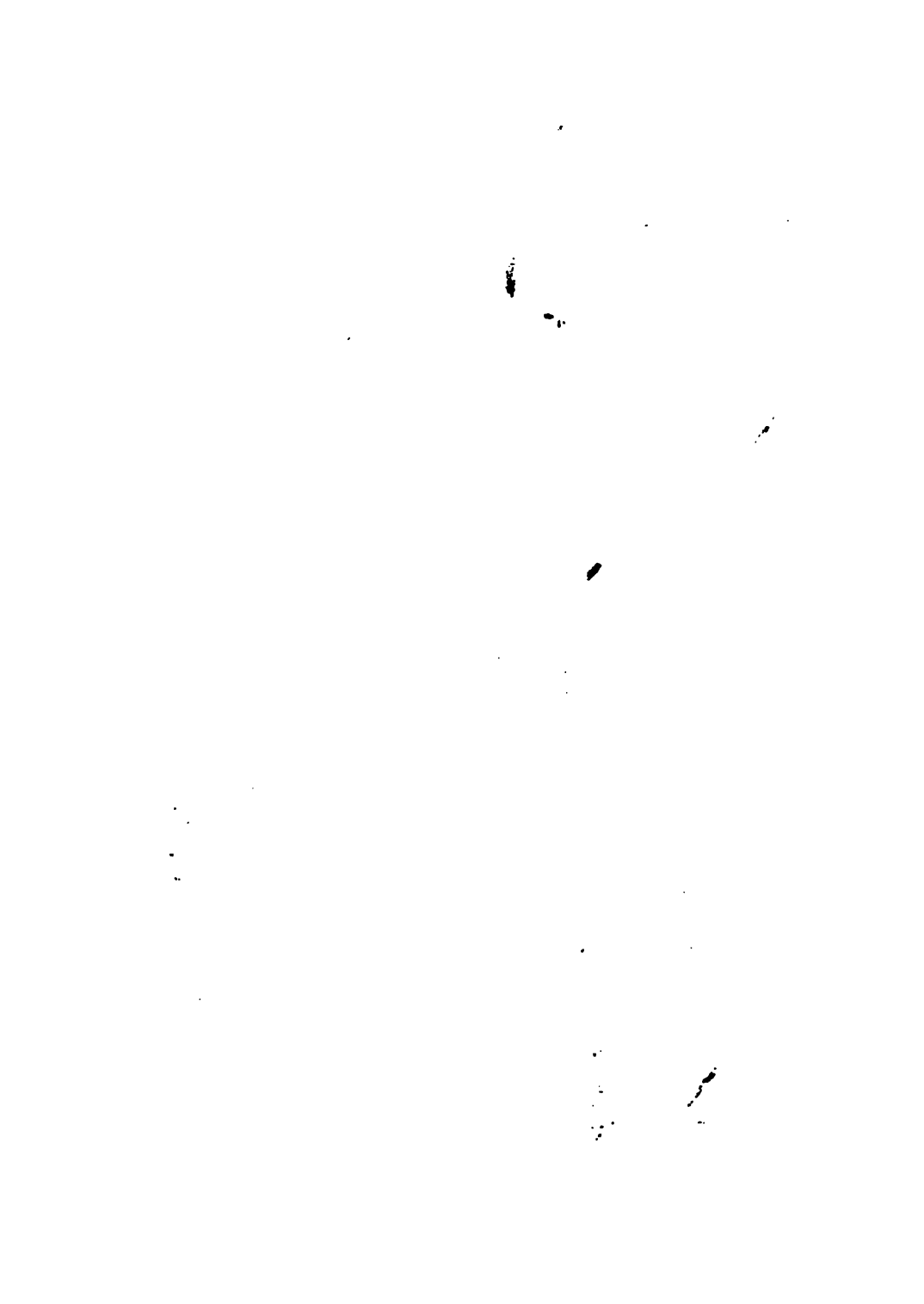




NIGHTS IN THE HAREM.



VOL. I.



THE MOHADDETYN IN THE PALACE.

---

NIGHTS IN THE HAREM;

OR,

*The Mohaddetyn in the Palace of Ghezire.*

BY

EMMELINE LOTT,

Ex-Governess to H. H. Ibrahim the Grand Pacha, son of H. H. Ismael Pacha, Viceroy  
of Egypt, and Heir Presumptive to the Viceroyalty of Egypt; Authoress of  
"Harem Life in Turkey and Egypt."

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.



LONDON:

CHAPMAN AND HALL, 193, PICCADILLY.

1867.

[The Right of Translation is reserved by the Authoress.]

203. f. 94.



LONDON:  
VIRTUE AND CO., PRINTERS,  
CITY ROAD.

DEDICATED

TO

HIS HIGHNESS IBRAHIM THE GRAND PACHA,

ETC., ETC.,

*His Presumptive to the Vicerealty of Egypt,*

BY

HIS HIGHNESS'S MOST HUMBLE

AND DEVOTED SERVANT,

THE AUTHORESS.

LONDON, *February*, 1867.



## PREFACE.

---

IN presenting to the Public this work, with a view to show how his Highness the Grand Pacha and their Highnesses the Princesses of Egypt are accustomed to pass their evenings in the Viceregal Odalisk, the Authoress ventures to hope that as large and flattering an amount of welcome will be accorded to it as has been bestowed upon *Harem Life in Egypt and Turkey*, which, written within the short period of a month, passed through *three* editions.

In order to account for the strange manner in which Turkish, Arabic, Greek, and Italian phrases are blended therein together, it is only necessary to observe that the inmates of the "*Viceroyal Mansions of Bliss*" always converse in a kind of *patois* chiefly composed of Turkish, Arabic, Greek, and a *polyglot* of African dialects, *interlarded* with a few Italian and French words, for *none* but their Highnesses speak either the Turkish or Arabic languages correctly; consequently, I cannot hold myself responsible for the orthography of that *patois*.

FEBRUARY, 1867.



# NIGHTS IN THE HAREM.

---

## CHAPTER I.

I WAS sitting one afternoon in the viceregal "Mansion of Bliss" at Ghezire, on the banks of the Nile, watching the gradual sinking of the sun at *Mogreb*, or sunset hour. It was in the sultry month of *Bestens* (May), the thermometer stood at 104° Fahrenheit, and the unhealthy *khamsin* and *el bawareh* (the hot wind) had rendered the hazy atmosphere almost as prejudicial to vegetable life, as if the blast of a fiery furnace had swept over the spot. Not a blade of vegetation was to be seen.

The apartment in which I sat might have been termed a *selamluck*, within the viceregal *odaluck*, but for the fact that it was never honoured by the presence of male visitors—polluted would be, perhaps, the expression more suited to the locality—if I except those "phantoms" who frequently come from other harems, on the banks of the Upper Nile, and far away from the country of the Pharaohs, to do homage and bring presents to my little pupil, H.H. the Grand Pacha Ibrahim, the *legitimate* son of the Viceroy of Egypt, and now, through

the *gracious* firman of Sultan Abdul Aziz, heir-presumptive to the viceroynalty of Egypt.

This *oda*, or room, used as his Highness's hall of audience, was far more richly and elegantly decorated than the generality of selamlicks. Three sides of it were provided with large and lofty French windows, which admitted not only an abundance of light, but plenty of pure air.

Although holding the post of Governess to the Prince, I had never embraced the Moslem faith, and had no idea, consequently, of submitting to be cloistered, after the fashion of the Viceroy's wives, the odalisques, and slaves. Permission had thus been granted me to effect the removal, from this room, of those elegant and picturesque latticed windows of richly carved wood, called *mushrebééh's*, for which eastern houses, and especially those of Cairo, were once so famous, but which are now, alas! being supplanted throughout modern Egypt by glazed panes and unsightly green blinds. The removal of these perforated openings allowed me the pleasure of gazing on the beauties of nature as often as I wished. This privilege was not without its drawbacks, however, for it subjected me to many petty annoyances. Visitors were perpetually swarming in and out of the apartment, and were far from proving welcome guests. Their object was neither to pay their respects to my little pupil, nor to keep me company in my solitude, but simply to stare out of the windows. Such an indulgence had never been permitted the inmates of the harem previous to my arrival; and this stolen pleasure, of which my self-imposed

guests never seemed to tire, was indulged in, unbeknown to her Highness's *Kislar Agaci*, and his fellow spectres. To me the practice became a perfect *nuisance*, and yet I was powerless to check it.

The floor of this selamlick was covered with a rich Brussels carpet, upon which the heavy tread of the officials and slaves fell noiselessly. On the ceiling was a painting, representing the capture of Acre by Ibrahim Pacha. This decoration was certainly not in accordance with the more stringent rules of the Koran, which proscribe all painted or graven images as works of idolatry. But this general prohibition Mahomet Ali had set at naught. He had even sat for his portrait, and in this *lax* nineteenth century, it has been actually asserted that the reigning Sultan, Abdul Aziz, has followed this dangerous example, by being also represented in effigy. The corners of the room glittered with richly coloured and gilded arabesques. Handsome divans, covered with fine chintz, extended along the sides of the room, and were placed between the windows which overlooked the extensive grounds of the "*terrestrial Eden*" of the viceregal pavilion.

In "The English Governess in Egypt and Turkey" I have already given a somewhat minute description of the palace of Ghezire. I have only now to add, that, bare as is the effect of the decoration and furniture of the Prince's reception room, there is just as little of the plentitude of luxury to be found in any of the viceregal odalicks. The floors, certainly, are carpeted; the doors and windows are curtained with hangings of rich satin damask, looped up by massive bullion cords and



tassels; the divans are soft and covered with costly material. But the numerous elegancies of life with which a high-bred English lady would have turned to advantage the resources of the fine roomy chambers, were entirely wanting. There were no inlaid tables, no sculptured cabinets covered with the thousand and one objects of *vertu*, no carefully littered articles of taste, to give that charm of grace which would have removed the sterile aspect of the regal-looking saloons. Perfume-censers certainly abounded, but these were only the pale amber mouth-pieces of the richly jewelled chibouques. From censers such as these spiral clouds of smoke from the burning *latakia* or *tombeki*, are emitted all day long. Mixed with this more potent incense are the fumes of the *narghilés* and cigarettes, manufactured by the odalisque's slaves, of *javach*, *orta*, or *dokanaklen*; whilst corridors, staircases, and entrance halls are tainted with the acrid odour of the *sert*, the strongest species of Turkish tobacco, full as powerful, and equally as offensive, as the commonest tobacco smoked by the lower classes in England. No lovely exotics bloom in the chambers of the palace. The ladies of the "upper ten thousand" in Egypt have no fancy for the decoration of their apartments with flowers. Nowhere are to be found perfume-fountains, spurting forth like *jets d'eau* of Kimmel's exquisite scents, and yet all these essences are almost as common in the bazaars of Cairo, Alexandria, and Suez, as they are in the shops of the London perfumers. Such delights are little in vogue among the houris of Ismael Pacha's *earthly* paradise. The fact is that these ladies are already too amply

supplied with stores of *atar-gul* or otto of roses, contained in large glass bottles, covered with wicker-work, largely manufactured at Damaghan, in Khorassan, Persia, and thus called "Damaghans," or in the Anglicised phrase, "*Demijohns*." Strange as it may seem, this delicious essence, which is retailed in the bazaars of the East at the rate of two francs per drop, is dispensed to their Highnesses, not in small flasks or toilette bottles, but in "*demijohns*." Not that any very liberal use of perfume of any kind is made by the ladies in question. They seldom indulge in its aid except on holidays and such state occasions, as the *Ramadan*, and *Baïram*, or when their liege-lord, the Viceroy, deigns to visit his "Abode of Bliss."

The atmosphere of the harem is thus, from dawn of day to close of eve, as redolent as the smoking-room of a European club of the fumes of tobacco, the aroma of Mocha coffee, and the odour of refined spirits. The liquor of which the princesses are accustomed to sip small thimblefuls occasionally during the day, and especially at the midday hour, is *eau d'or*, or what is more commonly termed *eau de vie de Dantzic*; the slaves, however, never attempt to join in such an indulgence, from the conviction with which they are duly imbued that the little dram is simply medicine *alla Franca*. When their Highnesses take their *kef*—the *dolce far niente* of Moslem women—the air becomes further impregnated with the pernicious exhalations of such injurious narcotics as opium, *hashish*, and similar compositions; whilst, above all, rises the obnoxious vapour of the strongly-smelling *sert* which the *oustas* are cease-

lessly smoking, not only all the livelong day, but unfortunately for delicate nostrils, all the night also.

Late in the afternoon to which I have referred I was reclining on the low divan, inhaling the cool and invigorating breeze which had sprung up off the waters of the muddy *Neel*. On chancing to glance my eyes in the direction of the pavilion, I saw the large door leading from it into the garden open, and the stately and commanding figure of an aged "spectre" emerge from the richly-sculptured portal. The figure passed with slow and majestic step along the hard, sandy, serpentine path which led towards the small garden annexed to the harem, and giving ingress to the enchanted castle in which I was immured, and in which the odalisques pass their actual life. (This life, it may here be said, is by no means one of pleasure, luxury, and inactivity, as the *alla Franca* world has been led to imagine. It is dull enough, nevertheless, although enlivened occasionally by the permitted visits of the female friends and relations of the caged beings, who penetrate where all "noble specimens of humanity" are strictly interdicted. The individual in question was about seventy years of age, tall in stature and lean in person, especially about the arms and legs. His countenance was prepossessing. Unlike the generality of his species, it wore no expression of cruelty, duplicity, or discontent. He looked what he really was—a kind, open-hearted, and amiable Oriental guardian; but there was that, at the same time, in his air, which revealed the practice of chewing opium and smoking hashish; an indulgence in which habit constitutes the main

happiness of the whole herd of these "atoms of humanity," when vegetating in viceregal palaces and harems. His cast of features showed that he was of Abyssinian origin, as is the case with almost all the viceregal chief attendants. He was dressed very plainly in the Nizam uniform, over which he wore an open green coat, indicating that he was a *hadji*, or pilgrim, who had performed the sacred journey to Mekkah; whilst the *tarboosh*, which covered his small head, was ornamented with a transverse band of gold, the distinguishing badge of all those who have visited El Hejaz, "the Holy Land" of the Moslems. His spare loins, instead of being girded by costly cashmere shawls, as is the invariable Oriental custom, were encircled by a broad twisted belt of green brocade, curiously embroidered with gold and silver letters, setting forth the chief formulas of the Moslem faith. Upon this strange-looking girdle now fell the rays of the declining sun, casting a brilliant gloss upon the worn-out, faded green hue of the brocade, and bringing out into bold relief the glitter of the embroidered characters which adorned the costly Cairene fabric.

I learned from inquiries which I afterwards made, that this striking individual had been born a *Christian*, but, when his family had been sold as slaves to the *jellabs*, or slave-dealers, he had become what he was, and had been instructed in the belief of Ismalism.

The singularity of the venerable pilgrim's *kummerbund*, or belt, attracted at once my attention. I felt an innate certainty that there were some remarkable inci-

dents connected with the possession of that curious-looking girdle; and, woman-like, I longed to know the antecedents of the wearer. Strangely enough, I had not long to wait before my curiosity was gratified.

The little Prince, my pupil, who had been thoroughly tired out by rambling about the fairy-like grounds of his illustrious father's pavilion, lay fast asleep at the other end of the divan; and as I had been enjoined, when assuming my post as *Gouvernante du Prince*, to guard that "dear little cherub" as the very "apple of my eye," I became fearful lest the heavy mist which had begun to rise from the Nile, and which was already filling the apartment like a dense Highland fog, might cause his Highness to take cold. So I rose, and hastily closed the windows. Scarcely had I resumed my seat, when I was startled at hearing the tread of heavy footsteps, advancing along the corridor which led to the audience-hall. I turned with surprise to see who could be my visitors at such an unreasonable hour, and beheld a long bony hand of ebony colour stretched forth to raise one corner of the heavy damask hanging which covered the entrance. Presently stood before me Suleyman, the Grand Eunuch of her Highness the Princess Zeneb. He was in the act of ushering into the Grand Pacha's presence the singular individual whom I had shortly before seen traversing the gardens. A whole troop of "spectres" were in attendance; and behind walked two very handsome young female slaves, of about thirteen or fourteen years of age, richly costumed in male attire. One of them bore in her hands a massive gold salver, covered with a white lace napkin,

richly embroidered with gold stars and silver crescents, on which was placed a species of pyramid, carefully concealed from "the eyes of the vulgar" by another costly napkin. The other carried a similar offering, covered by a magnificent cloth of gold.

Suleyman advanced into the room barefooted. Only a few days previously I had severely reprimanded one of the chief attendants for having been guilty of a shocking breach of Oriental etiquette, by presuming to enter the presence of his Highness in patent-leather slippers.

By this time I had been long enough among Easterns to know how "to assume that tone of command, without which, whatever may be thought of it in Europe, it is impossible to take the lead in the East." The chief attendant made his salaam to my Prince, and then to myself, detested Giaour as I was. This respect all the Spectres and Slaves had learned to show me invariably, even although I was that miscreant *kelb el Nasrânee*, or "dog of a Christian," whose countenance, in their hearts, they called on Allah to make cold, and whom they regarded as a *Sheitan*, or devil. The staff, which followed in single file, also performed the due salaam, and ranged themselves in a semicircle in front of the divan, occupied by myself and the sleeping little Prince, the two female slaves taking up their posts at each end of the living crescent. When this ceremony was completed, Suleyman returned to the entrance, took the aged Hadji by the hand, and led him before me. The Grand Pacha still lay fast asleep.

"*Salam Aleikum, Khanoum Effendem*" ("Good day

to you, Lady”), exclaimed Suleyman, advancing to the divan.

“*Aleikum Salam khosh Gelden*” (“You are welcome”), was my response; and, pointing to a vacant divan, extending along one side of the room, I added, “*Otour! Otour!*” (“Be seated! Be seated!”).

The Grand Eunuch, and his venerable companion, seated themselves accordingly; whilst all the attendants of the retinue squatted themselves down, with one accord, on the rich Brussels carpet. It now became necessary to rouse his little Highness. The Grand Pacha had been greatly fatigued by an unusually long walk. On being disturbed, he proceeded to rub his eyes vigorously with his tiny fingers. A host of those plagues of Egypt, the flies, had settled themselves on his eyelids, and sought a disporting place up his nostrils, during his *kef*. That not the slightest annoyance had been experienced by the Prince during his sleep, from these assailants, arose from the fact of his partial Arab extraction. The descendants of Ishmael are reputed to bear the attacks of these torments with impunity: and on the side of his mother, the Princess Zeneb, the Viceroy Ismael Pacha’s *second* wife, the Prince had the blood of the Arab race.

As soon as the Grand Pacha had recovered his equanimity of temper, which was somewhat ruffled, on his being so unceremoniously aroused from his *dolce far niente*, he fixed his piercing eyes on the form of the strange Kislar Agaci, scanned him from head to foot, and then exclaimed, in an authoritative tone of voice, “*Minient?*” (“Who are you?”)

The aged Abyssinian prostrated himself at the feet of the Prince, made his *temena*, or customary salutation, and bent his eyes on the ground as he commenced his address.

“*Allah-es-marladek Effendina!* (May God have your Highness in his holy keeping!) I am Yusuf Ali, the Kislar Agaci of her Highness Fatimah Khanoum, the wife of the defunct Viceroy, Abbas Pacha; and, having just returned from my second pilgrimage to El Hejaz, I am come to deposit at the feet of your Highness the presents which her Highness, my illustrious mistress, and Soudan, the Chief Eunuch of the *Masjid el Nabawi* (the Prophet’s Mosque), committed to my care.”

“*Pek-ahi-dostoun*” (“It is well, my friend”), replied the Prince, clapping his little hands with glee, and casting wistful eyes on the two white slaves. At a sign made to them by Suleyman, the two figures advanced towards the viceregal divan, knelt down, with their eyes cast on the floor, and stretched forth the salvers for presentation to his Highness.

The venerable Yusuf then advanced, with an air of considerable pride in the honour conferred on him by having been selected to execute the commands of the Guardian of the Prophet’s Mosque, removed the elegant napkins from the salvers, and displayed their contents to the delighted eyes of the little Prince. On the first stood beautifully executed models of the Prophet’s tomb and of the *Kaabah* (the temple, or more strictly, cave), constructed of crystallised sugar, ornamented with sweetmeats. Before the gates of the latter model were



spread shreds of the old *kismah* (the curtain) which covers the Prophet's tomb. On the other was placed a model, representing the luxuriant date-grove which ornaments the garden of the Lady Fatimah at El Medinah. From the branches of the mimic palm hung clusters of the fruit; whilst at the foot of the centre tree were placed several *real* dates, no less than two inches in length, which had been gathered from the favourite tree of the Lady Fatimah, as an acceptable offering to the Grand Pacha. This model was executed in candied green ginger, the simulated clusters of fruit being fashioned in sugar.

Rising from the divan, I took from the elder slave the beautiful models of the Prophet's Tomb and the Kaabah, and, bearing them carefully in my hands, placed them by the Prince's side. At this action the whole assembly of guardians and slaves looked thunder-struck. "*Bounou akel ihata itméz—Bouna téaggub idérim, chachârem!*" ("It is inconceivable!—I am astonished!") was ejaculated by them all in an explosive chorus. I must confess I was startled at first by the vehemence of the demonstration, and the unmistakable indignation with which the expression of surprise was uttered. But I quickly bethought me of the deadly hatred borne by all Moslems to the Christian, took into consideration the horror which was felt on seeing the sacred models defiled by the polluted fingers of a *Giaour*, or infidel, and so held my peace. Some of the most bigoted of the slaves even went so far as to mutter, "*Anessemy zikaam*"—one of the *most* contemptuous expressions in use among the true believers. Still I

never uttered a syllable. The Grand Pacha had heard the words, however. He knit his dark little brows, and exclaimed, "*Haidé tou, o né sakil chey, Sécinizi, Kécin, Mustakil bounou isterim!*" ("Oh, how rude that is! hold your peace! be quiet! It is my pleasure!")

A deadly silence reigned for some minutes. Then, all at once, a chorus of voices simultaneously shouted, "*Seu ektiar der Agam. Astefer Allah! Astefer Allah!*" ("You are the master, my Lord. May God pardon us! May God pardon us!")

When at last "the tumult dwindled to a calm," the Prince proceeded to examine the models minutely. The ingenuity with which they had been executed appeared greatly to excite his curiosity. He was not what might be called a precocious child, but he was really a clever one. When his inspection was finished, he waved his hand, and I placed the precious gifts on an ormolu table, standing near the divan. He then beckoned to me to take up the scraps of the Kaabah's old veil, and place them by his side. I obeyed. But my act had nearly brought me to even worse grief than before. It was hardly to be endured that *I* should touch the models of the Prophet's tomb and temple; but the fact of my placing my polluted fingers on the sacred relics of the "Veil of the Bride of Mekkah" was too much for the superstitious feelings of the slaves. Most of them I knew were as confirmed bigots as the ladies in the Sultan's "Abode of Bliss." They fixed their large, dark, glaring eyes on me, like a pack of ravenous wolves, ready to devour their prey. I, "the miscreant of an infidel," as they called me, had defiled

the shreds of the *kismah* ! How gladly, with their own hands, would they have torn me limb from limb !

A host of female slaves had by this time stationed themselves close by the tapestry of the entrance and in the corridor. One of them, named Kabah, an Ethiopian, inferior to the others both in race and breeding, who had but lately arrived at the palace, from one of the Viceroy's other "Abodes of Bliss," pushed her way in front of the semicircle of attendants, and was on the point of snatching the sacred Moslem relics from my "infidel" hands, when Suleyman seized her, and pushed her roughly back into her place, exclaiming, as he laid his *courbach* on her shoulders, "*Y' Allah ! Seuchok-adam ! Divané, ruck !*" ("In the name of Allah ! This is a bold deed ! Idiot, begone !") Then turning towards me, and making the temena with infinite tact, he said, "*Khanoum Effendem, Affiet allah ! Mashallah ! Mashallah !*" ("Lady, much pleasure attend you ! Well done ! Well done !")

Nothing daunted by the display of bigotry, and the demonstration so vigorously made, I took the pieces of the old *kismah* from the Prince when he had sufficiently examined them ; and replacing them in front of the model of the Kaabah, I looked the assembly of true believers *full* in the face, and firmly pronounced the words, "*Allah-il-Allah ! Mahomet resoul Allah !*" ("God is great : and Mahomet is his Prophet.") This verbal concession restored peace and harmony at once. All responded with one voice, "*Amin ! Amin !*" ("Amen ! Amen !"), and "*Alham-dil-lil-lah !*" ("God be praised !") —the storm had passed away.

The second slave now approached the Prince, knelt down, and bent her forehead to the ground. I took the gold salver in both my hands, and placed it on the divan by the side of the Grand Pacha. When his little Highness had sufficiently admired the ingenious manner in which the mimic grove was constructed, he stretched forth his left hand, took up the *real* dates which lay at the foot of the tree, and handed one of them to me to taste. Child as he was, he knew well the story of the Viceroy, who had been removed from his "terrestrial Eden" by the means of poisoned dates, presented to him by his own little nephew, a child like himself, who had been thus made the instrument of some *Harem* intrigue to compass his death.

The truth is, that, independently of my official functions, I had also become the viceregal "*Taster*." Such an appointment was, under any circumstances, a post of singular responsibility. In my position it had been rendered doubly responsible. Whether from any *sinister* motive towards myself, the Giaour, or not, I have never been able to determine; but it is very certain that the *Hakims Baschi*, both in Egypt and Constantinople, invariably neglected to affix impressions of their signet seals to any of the boxes, phials, or packets of medicine which were placed in my hands to administer to the little Prince, although such a duty was *imperative* on them. Neither did they furnish me with impressions in wax, as was needful, of these same seals, in order to compare them with those which ought to have been affixed to all the medicines. This mode of proceeding had been formerly adopted by all medical men in the ser-

vice of the Egyptian and Ottoman governments as a matter of mere common prudence. Instances of princes having been seized, and suddenly carried off by attacks, rather hastily attributed to apoplexy, had not unfrequently occurred; they might occur again. *Allah kereem!* ("God be praised!") I left his Highness Ibrahim, the Grand Pacha, in good health. But had any untoward circumstance taken place during the exercise of my functions, the blame, which ought to have fallen on the Hakims for the neglect of their duty, might have been visited by the vengeance of the viceregal family upon myself. The post of "*Taster*," if I do not mistake, is still extant at some of the courts of Europe. It has been conferred, however, with a better sense of humanity, among the sovereigns of India and China, upon apes, expressly kept for the purpose of tasting suspected viands before being touched by their Highnesses, and thus protecting them from the danger of poison. All along the line of march on the pilgrimage to El Hejaz another precaution has been adopted. The itinerant traders who supply the *findjans* of coffee, or goblets of sherbet, are constrained to take the first sip of their own concoctions. This preliminary trial was made imperative at a time when poisoning was carried on to a most frightful extent. It has been said, although I cannot say with how much truth, that the illustrious great-grandfather of his Highness was wont to import professional poisoners from Europe, many of whose descendants still reside on the banks of El Neel, and are infamous for their diabolical acts.

But I return from this lengthy digression on the subject of "taste."

“*Bismillah! Bismillah!*” (“In the name of the most merciful God!”), I exclaimed, as I placed the date in my mouth, and tasted it. The fruit was evidently harmless. “*Pék-ala*” (“It is excellent”), I said to the Prince, who immediately clutched and devoured some of the dates, and desired me to have the rest placed, along with the miniature date grove, by the side of the sacred models.

“*Be-hey?*” (“What is this?”), inquired the Prince, pointing with outstretched finger to the aged Hadji’s girdle, and, at the same time, fixing his keen, dark eyes upon the stately form, as if taking an inventory of every portion of his attire. The curiosity of my pupil seemed to have been almost as powerfully attracted by that basilisk of a girdle as my own had been when my eyes fell upon its mystic characters glistening in the light of the setting sun.

“*Kouchak, Jaquir benam*” (“My belt, my guardian angel”).

“*Foók!*” (“Undo it!”), cried the Grand Pacha.

The Kislár Agaci hesitated. “It is only a shabby old girdle.”

“*Maleesh! Maleesh! Mustakil bounou isterim. Bakalum! Bakalum! Capouk-ol!*” (“Never mind! Never mind! I will have it so. We shall see! We shall see! Make haste!”) rejoined the little Prince.

The aged Yusuf made no attempt to unfasten his kummerbund.

The Grand Pacha clapped his hands. A whole brigade of little Amazonian slaves, belonging to his Highness, responded to his summons, and now stood

before their Agam. "*Chibouque, cahveh getir*" ("Bring pipes and coffee"), commanded the proud little grandson of the renowned conqueror of Syria. The battalion of "dots of humanity," who were about as tall as the smallest of aristocratic boyish "tigers," and all of one height, vanished like sprites in a fairy extravaganza.

During the brief absence of the tiny troop, the by-play, which was carried on between his little Highness and the Kislár Agaci, was too remarkable not to deserve especial description. By my side sat the Grand Pacha, biting ferociously at the quicks of his nails, which his Arab nurse Dada had cut *very short*, in order to save herself the trouble of paring and cleaning them daily: and his little Highness was apt to be so vastly particular in his personal habits and attire, that any lack of due attention to his requirements was sure to excite his wrath—well! there sat his Highness, puffing out his chubby cheeks like a toad swelling with excitement. He was evidently working himself into a terrific passion. His eyeballs were inflamed, and his glance was as fiery as that of an infuriated tiger cub. He appeared on the point of springing at the aged Yusuf, and tearing the magic belt from off his waist. I knew that to soothe his wrath was a task of no little difficulty.—The boy was the idol of his illustrious *baba* ("father"). His will was law; and not an inmate of the palace dared gainsay it. I trembled, consequently, lest some ignoble catastrophe should be at hand, and the amiable looking Abyssinian become the victim of the irascible temper of that despotic child.

In "The English Governess in Egypt and Turkey" I have already given several instances of the fulfilment of the little Prince's commands, even when life and death were at stake. I was, therefore, not by any means sure that he would not, in imitation of his great grandfather, Mahomet Ali the Great, order the venerable Kislár Agaci to be flung into the waters of the sacred Nile. Indeed, had the little despot, like Shakespeare's Richard the Third, exclaimed, "Off with his head!" the eunuchs at his command would instantly have drawn their finely-tempered swords, and, in the twinkling of an eye, decapitated the unfortunate Yusuf. Had the order been given it would certainly have been obeyed; unless indeed, eschewing the Oriental proverb,

"Fan not the hostile spark, between two friends that glows:  
For they will soon embrace, but both remain thy foes,"

I had interfered, and used the influence I possessed over my pupil, to have the order countermanded. Then indeed, the *Fena Pacha* ("Bad Pacha") of my feeble voice might perhaps have rescued the poor wretch from his fate; for luckily I could generally contrive to calm the little Prince's most passionate demonstrations of temper by shaking my finger at him, and saying, "*Fena, fena!*" ("Naughty, naughty!")

At that time I was fully impressed, *fortunately*, with the sense of my own power, and the notion that, being an Englishwoman, no harm could happen to me. Had any danger menaced me from any of the attendants of his Highness, I felt assured that my own *special*



Prince would have interfered in my behalf. I have since learned that had I been "*spirited away*," which in all probability would have been my *kismet*, had not Allah protected me from the tricks and manners of a clique, it would have required a considerable amount of *outward* pressure in the highest quarter of a certain Circumlocution Office, to have roused *official* inquiry.

During this little scene of temper on the part of the Grand Pacha, the Kislár Agaci remained quietly squatted on the divan opposite the angry prince, counting the beads of his *Tusbee* or rosary. His head was bent down, and his eyes were riveted on the ground. He was evidently absorbed in deep and perhaps painful reflection. The scene of contrast between the passionate Grand Pacha and the calm, venerable pilgrim, was worthy a Wilkie's pencil.

Some of the little slaves now advanced to the divan carrying trays, on which were placed sweetmeats, cakes, fruits, and confectionery in glass dishes. These delicacies they handed to his Highness, then to myself, and lastly to the aged Yusuf and the amiable Suleyman. Others followed, bearing glasses of iced water from Bir Yusuf—the Caliph Yusuf's well at Cairo—and findjans of coffee, served in gold zarfs, thickly encrusted with diamonds, sapphires, emeralds, rubies, and other precious stones. Some of the sprites had now retired, but only to return in the character of *chibouquejdi*, or pipe-bearers, holding trays, on which were placed bundles of cigarettes. These they handed to the Kislár Agaci and Suleyman as a distinguished

mark of his Highness's attention. Neither the Prince nor myself indulged in the "*fragrant weed*." Two other slaves now walked round the saloon, each holding, with a pair of silver pincers, a piece of live charcoal, from which the cigarettes were lighted. In a brief space of time the whole party present was engaged in smoking, the attendants also having begun, in the interim, to "puff away" at their individual strong *sert* weeds.

To those who may be ignorant of the various shades of Oriental etiquette, it may be as well to explain here the differences which exist in the treatment of guests. Coffee *alone* is presented to all new-comers indiscriminately. The offer of a pipe, cigarettes, or cigars, is considered to be a far greater mark of respect. Between private individuals, the pipe and coffee are, almost always, offered together; but in official circles, the nicest gradations of ceremony in these matters are frequently observed. The greatest token of honour and confidence is given when the Oriental presents his guest with the pipe he has been or is still smoking. Her Highness, the *Princess Epouse*, the Viceroy's second wife, on whom he had himself bestowed that title, and by which she is always known and addressed in Egypt, was frequently accustomed to take the cigarette from her mouth, and hand it to me to keep alight. This attention was as much a token of protection as the eating of salt with an Arab Moslemah. Smoking was always abhorrent to me. The cigarette, consequently, was placed to my lips without being smoked. When the light was extinguished, I handed the Princess a

fresh one. Then she would pat me on the back, and, smiling graciously, say, "*Batal, Madame!*" ("Bad, Madame!") "why did you let it go out? But never mind! Give me another!" Thus, whenever I visited the other wives of the Viceroy, coffee and cigarettes were invariably placed before me; but when I had a ceremonial audience of her Highness the Princess Validè of Egypt, the *Nina*, or mother, of the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, coffee *alone* was presented, her Highness only showing her special consideration for me by not smoking in my presence.

Whilst the general smoking bout was going forward, the Grand Pacha motioned to his favourite slave, Fieka, who knelt at his feet in order to await his commands, to hasten to her Highness Zeneb Khanoum, his illustrious Nina, and beg her to send him several purses of paras, and two handsome Cashmere shawls; those worn round the waist in the East, of Cashmere fabric, being generally narrow, and only of middling length. After giving these instructions, the Grand Pacha explained to the old Hadji that he intended bartering the shawls in exchange for his faded old *chal*, or belt. He had evidently taken a great fancy to the object of my previous interest. By this time the apartment had been illuminated, on the darkness of night setting in. The light of the hundred wax candles, burning in the magnificent chandelier which hung suspended from the ceiling, now fell on the mystic embroidery of the strange belt; and, owing to the singular manner in which it had been twisted around the loins of the wearer, it bore the appearance of a

beautiful boa-constrictor, with variegated and glittering scales. Now, all Arabs have an instinctive reverence for serpents.

The Kislar Agaci listened attentively to the words which fell from the little Prince. For a few moments he remained silent; then he suddenly burst forth with the words, "*Wallah Billah! Wallah Billah! Bosh! Bosh! Hûsnu tevèg guhumuzu bilirim bou olâmaz.*" ("What dirt have I eaten! What dirt have I eaten! Nonsense! Nonsense! Your Highness is very kind; but that cannot be.") "By the beard of the Prophet, I will never part with that belt until the day when Monkir and Néker (the Angels of Death) question my departed spirit, as to the mode of life I have led on earth, and, after its purgatorial torments, carry it up to the seventh heaven. *Janum! Janum! Imkianser-Févkaladé bir-chey-dir. La! la! la!*" ("By my soul! by my soul! It is impossible. This is a strange kind of business. No! no! no!") "It shall descend, as an *heirloom*, to my next-of-kin."

"*Y'allah! Mashallah! Mashallah!*" ("In the name of Heaven! Is that all? Is that all?"), exclaimed the Prince.

"*Inshallah! Inshallah!*" ("By the most merciful God! By the most merciful God!"), "it is composed of pieces of the various *kiswahs* that have from time to time of late years decorated Mekkah's bride—the *Kaabah*, the navel of the world! For know, oh! mighty and beneficent Prince, that, although Shaybah-bin-lisman decreed that the old *kiswahs* should be buried in the bowels of the sacred earth of the Holy City, Ayisha (the prophet's

wife) commanded that they should be sold, and the proceeds distributed to the poor; and this practice, *Alham-dil-lil-lah*, is still enforced by the *Aghas* (eunuchs) of the kaabah. *Raïët-télachlegen, télach-icin dey im. Nèitméli* " ("I am sadly puzzled how to act. But I will not allow that"), added the venerable Hadji, as he stroked his long snow-white flowing beard several times.

The Grand Pacha screwed up his eyes, and looking at the Kislár Agaci in that singular manner which is so characteristic of all members of the Viceroy's family, at last exclaimed "*Taib! Taib!*" ("Well said! Well said!") "*Alham-dil-lil-lah! Alham-dil-lil-lah!*" ("Be it even as you will! Be it even as you will!") and he motioned to the beautiful slave Feika to resume her place at his feet. A pleasing smile played over his intelligent little face. The idea had crossed him that the venerable Kislár Agaci might be induced to assume the functions generally taken by Abyssinians of Mohaddetyn, or "Story Teller." He turned to me, with that desire he never failed to evince of giving me pleasure, and asked whether a story, told at evening-tide, would not amuse me.

"*Bou bana kémáli mertébe séving vériyor*" ("It would afford me the greatest gratification"), I answered.

"Then we shall learn," continued his little Highness, clapping his hands and laughing with delight, "how he came possessed of that sacred old *chál*, on which he sets such store."

Independently of my own curiosity, I was all the more ready in giving my acquiescence, as I knew how deeply interested the Grand Pacha was in everything concerning El Hejaz. I had frequently seen him direct

his troop of little Amazons to perform *tableaux vivants* of the Hadjis on their pilgrimage to Mekkah ; and I was aware with what interest he looked forward to the time when, at a more advanced age, he might have the privilege of accompanying their Highnesses the Viceroy's wives on their journey to the Holy Land of the Moslem.

Thus encouraged in his idea, the Prince at once ordered Yusef to relate to him the manner in which he had obtained possession of those holy shreds.

" *Hipsi birdir ! Hipsi birdir ! Seu ektiar der Agam ! Seu bilirsin !*" (" So be it ! So be it ! You are the master. You know best !") replied the Kislar Agaci, as he emptied the findjan of coffee, and puffed away at the pale amber mouth-piece, richly encrusted with large diamonds, of the magnificent tchibouk, which had been handed to him by the slaves as a *baksheesh*, or " gift," from the impulsive little Prince, when his quick wrath had passed away like a lightning flash and given place to kindlier feelings.

The venerable old Abyssinian bowed his head, and was about to enter on his noble functions as Mohad-detyn by commencing his narrative, when a host of his fraternity, belonging to the suites of the Viceroy's three wives, entered the apartment, yelling in full chorus, "*Allah umerler vere Effendina !*" (" God grant your Highness a long life !"), and making their temena in the most approved Oriental fashion. The little Prince knew well enough that he was almost idolised by all the attendants : so he received them graciously, and motioned them with his right hand to otour. In

an instant they had all squatted themselves on the crimson silk cushions, which the slaves had placed on the carpet, behind the semicircle of eunuchs, belonging to the establishment of his Highness.

Refreshments having been served to the new comers, silence was soon restored; and the venerable Yusuf, evidently delighted that the displeasure of my hasty-tempered, but kind-hearted, and to me most affectionate, pupil had so speedily passed away, proceeded without further reluctance to make his "*début*" in his new character of story teller.

Thinking that the Prince might derive considerable instruction, as well as amusement, by a detail of the different matters which had come under his notice in the routine of his official duties, he thus began his

#### REMINISCENCES OF ACTIVE SERVICE.

"A few years before the death of the Viceroy, Abbas Pacha, the son of Toussoom Pacha, the eldest son of Mahomet Ali the Great, her Highness Fatimah Khanoum, his mother, then Princess Validè of Egypt, became a severe bigot and rigid moralist.

"A short time previously to her departure for El Hejaz, that princess induced her son, Abbas Pacha, to give orders to the Sheiks of Cairo for the arrest and imprisonment of all the *Baboulouki*—the disreputable women, so called from the fact of their residence in that abominable quarter, the Baboulouk. These females were easy enough to be distinguished from others of their sex by their peculiar appearance. Their eyebrows were united by a line of Indian ink, and, like the women

of questionable character at Istamboul (Constantinople), they wore transparent yashmaks, through which their countenances were visible. Finding that these instructions were not carried out with alacrity, her Highness offered a capitation fee for every woman of loose character who might be taken up. In a few days some six or seven hundred or more were imprisoned. The greater portion of them were then severely flogged with the courbach (the Egyptian *knout*), and afterwards put on board vessels, and banished to the Upper Nile."

It may here be said, to the partial interruption of the Hadji's narrative, that the specimens of the "social evil" of Cairo, to whom allusion was made, were far outdone by the females of various nationalities; but especially Italians and Levantines, whom I lately saw at Alexandria, in the immediate vicinity of the principal *birrarias*, or European ale-stores. They were sitting on rows of chairs in the street, attired in low-neck dresses, bedaubed with paint and cosmetics, and bedizened with cheap French and Italian jewellery. I never set my eyes on more tawdry-looking objects. They reminded me of the females I had seen in pictures of old English fairs strutting before the front of "Richardson's show." Here they plied their disgusting traffic with brazen impudence. Within the *birrarias* stood also French, Italian, and German women of the boldest aspect, indulging in language which might have even shocked the loosest denizens of the *pavés* of London or Paris.

Egypt is certainly a strange and singularly-constituted country. Some of the *birrarias* are kept by very remarkable characters. In 1864, a young woman,



named Albania, about twenty-four years of age, and of prepossessing appearance, opened one of these establishments under very peculiar circumstances. She had been married to a middle-aged wealthy Greek merchant, who, being anxious to provide for his *cara sposa*, when he was on the point of death, begged a young man, who was already on intimate terms with the lady, to marry her when a widow, and promised, if this were done, to leave him the whole of his vast property. The offer was accepted without hesitation; and to make the arrangement sure, the dying husband insisted that the marriage ceremony should take place before the breath had left his body. A Greek priest was summoned, the rites were performed, when, to the astonishment of all, and the utter discomforture of the newly-married couple, the dying man recovered. The indignant wife, however, now refused to live with her ex-husband. Being left to her own resources, she adopted the "public" line, and has since become one of the "notables" of Alexandria. She has insured herself a most lucrative trade. The draught of ale drawn at her *birraria* is said to be something fabulous; and her establishment has obtained the name of the "Gossip Shop" *var excellence* of that strangest of all strange cities. It may be said, at the same time, that many of the *Dames de Comptoir* of these Alexandrian stores make excellent marriages with the petty foreign merchants, who meet at their establishments the purchasers with whom they strike their bargains on the premises.

"All my exertions," continued the improviso, Mohaddetyn, "coupled with those of my subordinates, to

render the duties of the Cawasses as easy as possible, failed to satisfy her Highness. Her zeal against the whole class of females was such that she went so far as to induce the Viceroy, Abbas Pacha, to exile 'the Light' of his own 'Abode of Bliss.' The lovely Zarfa, as she was called, was a Wallachian by birth. Unfortunately for the fascinating '*light*,' she happened to be at that time in rather '*bad odour*' with his Highness. One day, when the Viceroy was sitting with the fair Zarfa by his side in the Uzbekeeh Gardens, smoking his pipe in public, a young Greek, who was known to have been enamoured of the beautiful 'frail one,' passed close by his Highness, and, as if by accident, knocked over the beautiful gold *narghilé*, in the delights of which he was indulging."

Now, the upsetting of a pipe in such a manner, I must add, is considered in the East in the same light as the laying of a horsewhip across the shoulders of a gentleman is looked upon in the West.

"The Viceroy was naturally indignant at the insult thus publicly offered him. Unable to resent his displeasure on the actual offender, because he belonged to that '*Council of Hats*' which curbed his ambitious projects, and who were his Highness's abomination—nay, the skeleton within his breast—he took advantage of his mother's importunities to exercise his vengeance on the unlucky Zarfa Hanem, and banished the once loved favourite to Dendera, on the Upper Nile.

"I have heard it said," added the Mohaddetyn, slyly addressing himself to the *Cocona*, as the governess was denominated, "that you, Khanoum Effendem, when at the

Old palace on the Bosphorus, knocked down with your crinoline two pipes, one, which was being smoked by a Hakim Bachi (the very Prince of Bolus), the other by a European, one of his Highness the Viceroy's *reputed* partners."

"*Taib! Taib!*" ("Well said! Well said!") was the reply of the Cocona.

"That '*light* of the palace,' however," continued Yusuf, "was not the Viceroy's *slave*. She was a *free* woman, so she soon contrived to find her way back to Cairo; and, thinking still to possess sufficient influence over his Highness to procure a mitigation of the sentence of punishment passed on her frail sisterhood, she even ventured to intercede for the return of the Baboulouki. The Viceroy was inexorable, however, and instead of reaping the reward of her well-meant endeavours, the fair Zarfa was destined to hear that fresh orders had been given for the removal of those women farther up the river, to Ferayg, close to the second cataract. The indignation of the Princess Validè at the return of the favourite to El-Kahirah was great, and more rigid measures than ever were taken in furtherance of her zeal. All the Sheiks received orders to place a guard round a certain house, situated close to the French Consulate, and not far from the convent of the Holy Fathers. It had come to the ears of the Princess Mother that this house was the place of rendezvous for certain Italian, Wallachian, French, and Levantine females of doubtful reputation.

"This Afrang Baboulouki was kept by a Florentine

woman of disreputable character, named Madame Tedesco, and this creature was reported to employ for her vile purposes an associate, who resided in the Via de la Scala, at Florence, where she had established an agency office. The business of this second disgrace to her sex was to advertise in foreign papers for English and French governesses, required by families of rank and position in various countries. When her unhappy victims were entrapped, under the pretence of being supplied with situations, with cool deliberation this person showed herself in her real light, as a mere *jellab*, or slave-dealer, and absolutely *sold* the more prepossessing of these fair exotics to foreign nobles of wealth. By this barter of women's most precious jewel she is said to have acquired a very large fortune, whilst her poor ignorant and inexperienced dupes were deluded into the acceptance of the vilest tinsel of false paste. When the poor fading flowers had ceased to adorn the conservatories of the Florentine villas, they were packed off, as mysteriously as smuggled wares, to Egypt, to decorate the Saloons of Signora Tedesco, where Pachas, ministers, members of the diplomatic corps, merchants, and *roués* of all countries nightly congregated. Many of the choicer plants from this foul soil were transplanted into the palaces of Egyptian Princes and Pachas of wealth; and here they vegetated, sumptuously tended perhaps, but in such *durance vile*, that no intelligence of friends or relatives could ever reach them. Many were—many *are still*—walled-up in these retreats, and will pass away to the tomb, under

the watchful care of guardians like myself, and surrounded by a mystery of seclusion, which no mortal being *dare* seek to unveil.

“From my own knowledge of the ‘Peris’ of the East, in all their varied nationalities, I can easily comprehend how soon not only Circassians, Georgians, Abyssinians, Ethiopians, and Indians, but even Europeans, become reconciled to the *dreadful* monotony of harem life. Setting aside their national costumes, which would inevitably subject them to considerable humiliation, the latter adopt the odalisque attire. After a short time passed in attempting to double themselves up like clasp-knives, in order to squat on their divans, they become adepts in the habit. They learn to smoke cigarettes, sip coffee, and eat sweatmeats; and after having inhaled the intoxicating fumes of opium, freshened by the perfumed water, through which they pass into their narghilé, whilst seated on the soft cushions of their luxuriant divans, they begin to enjoy, with rapturous delight, the pleasures of their *kef*. Thus they soon fall into a state of passive immobility, profound abstraction, and happy forgetfulness of their native lands, their families, their friends, and the whole outer world.

“The inertness, so characteristic of Oriental life, thus gradually creeps over their yielding forms, until it wholly entwines them in its enervating embrace. The flies are now wrapped in the spider’s web. By the force of example they then become accustomed to waddle about their caged, mystic retreats as naturally as if they had passed their whole lives behind trellis-work windows, beside fountains of marble, or beneath

the shade of cypress trees. Then, as they acquire the language, they listen to the tales of the ladies of the harem with as much relish as they formerly would have enjoyed their last new novel in their homes at Paris, London, or Brussels. At first the Turkish and Arab *cuisine* is quite distasteful to them, but they learn by degrees to accustom themselves to kebabs and confectionery until their meals become a pleasure instead of a disgust to them. Not only do they sip their findjans of coffee as continually as the Turkish or Egyptian women, but they learn to quaff glass after glass of *eau d'or* with infinite gusto. A longing for the enjoyment of 'the sybaritism of smoking' creeps over them more and more, until it becomes their only time-killer, excepting when the luxury of the *kef* is indulged in, and prolonged longer and longer, until they sink into their *last kef*, from which they can no more be roused. To their continually inhaling an atmosphere impregnated from morn till eve with the fumes of latakia and strong sert, as well as to their own habit of smoking narcotics, may be ascribed that growing, and at last total, forgetfulness of their past lives—that utter oblivion of former scenes, of once well-known faces—that complete obliteration of all memory. A deluge of opium and hashish has swept all away before it. They have fallen now, gradually and almost insensibly, into that sickly state of enervation, from which no intellectual flight, no wholesome energy, no power of will, can rescue them evermore. Activity, occupation, command of mind, are gone—hopelessly gone. The confirmed narcotic opium smoker alone remains.”

“*Bou-bir-mouhakkah chey-dir*” (“It is a positive fact”), interrupted the Cocona, “for I myself have been a victim of the same feelings.”

I then narrated how, when I had been suffering from a severe attack of neuralgia and nervous fever in the Viceroy’s Old palace on the Bosphorus, I had fallen, although I never indulged in the use of tobacco, and, much less, opium, into such a sickly state of inertness, that I felt no desire to move; no wish to go into the “*outer world*;” that my very voice nearly failed me, that my memory seemed to be passing away from me, and that all remembrance of my home, my dearest friends, my most intimate associations, seemed gradually but *surely* fading from my mind. The feeling I then experienced was that of Bottom, in Shakespeare’s “*Midsummer Night’s Dream*.” “I have an exposition of sleep come upon me,” was my constant thought; and I recalled with a shudder how memorable were these words as those uttered by the great comedian, Harley, when he staggered from the stage but a few short hours before he breathed his last. An inward conviction gained more and more the upper hand in my mind, that some calamity was hanging, like the sword of Damocles, over my head.

“*Allah kereem!*” I continued, “I had still sufficient strength left to be able to make an attempt to regain a portion of that mental power which was gradually leaving me. A voice seemed to cry, ‘Arise, arise, or you are lost!’ I resolved to quit the Old palace at once. I did so, and returned to Alexandria. With these feelings the ravages of the fever, and

the feeble state of my health, brought on by want of nourishment, may have had much to do. Unlike the 'Peris' you have been describing, I could not reconcile myself to the Arab or Turkish diet: and, in truth, I was a sufferer from that disease for which no physician can find a remedy in his pharmacopœia—which no medicine can arrest; the quiver from which proceed the strongest arrows of death—the disease of *semi-starvation*. Still, I attributed my wretched state mostly to the close confinement I had to endure at Constantinople; and, above all, to the effect of an atmosphere reeking with the fumes of opium, hashish, and strong tobacco, those slow yet certain poisons to all European constitutions, especially when the individual exposed to their baneful influence wholly eschews their use."

"*Allah-es-malardek, Khanoum Effendem!*" ("May God have you in his keeping, lady!") exclaimed the Mohaddetyn. "But to resume my narrative. Signora Tedesco was, as you can easily imagine, the depositor of many secrets, which would have greatly comprised a vast portion of the Upper Ten Thousand in Egypt. It became necessary to thwart the purposes of the Princess Validè. His Excellency, Abdelhai Pacha, the Minister of Police, consequently sent to the faded 'Lily of the Arno,' as the middle-aged hostess of the establishment might be termed, several purses of paras for distribution, as bakshesh, among the Cawasses, who had been placed round and about her grounds. The magical result of this arrangement was, that all these officials were suddenly seized by an attack of ophthalmia, a complaint



so common in Egypt, and were thus too blind to be able to see anything whatever that happened in the locality."

"*Taib! Taib!*" ("Well spoken! Well spoken!"), exclaimed the Cocona, laughing; "ophthalmia is a *most* contagious disease in Egypt."

The thought crossed me at the moment that I had once heard a literary gentleman, who held a high official appointment in a foreign consulate at Alexandria, remark that he had been trying to put together some "Dottings of Egypt and Turkey," but had given up the attempt, as he could not, distinguished book-maker as he was, find sufficient materials to work upon. I was sadly afraid the learned gentleman must have suffered from repeated attacks of the disease in question; for during my short residence in the land of the Pharaohs, *inexperienced* as I was in authorship, I had found far more matter than I could use, and felt convinced that such an accomplished writer might have done as much, had not his eyesight been so grievously affected. It is possible, however, that *Consular authorities* may have their hands tied behind their backs so as to render penmanship impossible. By the regulations of the Consular service, as I understand, they are not permitted to defend themselves when assailed by the press, and "*dottings*" may, perhaps, be considered equally objectionable.

"A strong suspicion, however," proceeded the narrator, "seemed to have crossed the mind of the Princess Validè that all was not right. She now issued instructions to the Minister of Police to set a watch around

the palace of the wily Armenian, Ernenistan Bey, the tutor of the late Ibrahim Pacha. The quondam professor, the brother of a member of the House of Commons in England, was, at that time, notorious for the number of beautiful '*Peris*' and Turkish houris caged within his excellency's enchanted castle. The Princess had taken it into her head that the Bey allowed his intimate friends to be amused by his odalisques. Such a scandalous state of proceedings she was determined to crush at once. The Viceroy, Abbas Pacha, moreover, goaded on by his rigid mother, issued an edict against the *almées*, or dancing girls. It became impossible for any Caireen grandee, or *Frenk*, foreigner, to give festive entertainments after the customary fashion. The whole *corps de ballet* was under the strictest interdict. But there are never wanting individuals who delight in setting the laws at defiance. An European of position at Cairo, who was on intimate terms with his Excellency Cherif Pacha, the enlightened ex-minister of foreign affairs in Egypt, induced a baboulouk named Keuli to make arrangements with four *almées* to give a '*fantasia*' on board his Nile boat, which was stationed off Boulac, the port of Cairo. The Sheik of old Cairo got wind of the affair, however; the five unfortunate women were carried off to prison, severely flogged with the *courbach*, and then banished to the banks of the Upper Nile.

“After having thus exerted all her most strenuous endeavours to purge the capital of its immoralities—but it can scarcely be said with success—the Princess Validè resolved to wash away the sins of her people,

along with her own, by undertaking a pilgrimage to the Kaabah. His Excellency Ahmed Pacha, her chamberlain, consequently sent to me about a week after the occurrence which I have just related, and informed me of her Highness's desire, that I should make all the necessary preparations for a pilgrimage to El Medinah. With this information I returned to the palace at Abbassiah.

"This structure," continued Yusuf, "is not yet completed. Be it borne in mind that his Highness, the present Viceroy, believes, as firmly as the Sultan himself, according to the general credence of the East, that as long as any building on which a man is engaged remains unfinished he will not die. Thus, his Highness Ismael Pacha, like all his predecessors, is continually occupied in *fresh* structures."

The Grand Pacha, as he heard these words, smiled complacently. He, too, at his early age, had already developed his fancy for the construction of palaces, by continually causing his little slaves, among the other *tableaux vivants* in which he delighted, to represent one setting forth the process of palace building.

"On reaching the Hall of the Eunuchs," pursued our Mohaddetyn, "I found my whole staff of subordinates squatted on divans, smoking their cigarettes, and eating some delicious bananas which had been sent them by the Viceroy Abbas Pacha's head gardener, a Scotchman of the name of McAdam, from the lovely gardens of Rhoda Island. But my orders were issued to them forthwith to proceed at once to the palace in *el Kar'ah* (the Citadel), and get everything ready for their journey.

'*Allah Kereem! Eyi-dir*' ('I like it well!') was the simultaneous response of the whole troop. Hastily sipping a findjan of coffee, and taking a few whiffs at my chibouque, I issued instructions to my fellow guardians to hasten the departure of the ladies of the palace and the slaves. I then quitted the hall, ascended the grand staircase, and entered the reception room of her Highness. Here I found everything already in bustle and confusion.

"The Princess Validè, who was squatted on a crimson silk cushion, which lay on the rich Brussels carpet, was busily employed superintending the movements of her suite and slaves, who were all engaged in packing the large *sarats* (trunks) considered necessary for the journey. Some were occupied in examining the wardrobe of her Highness, and selecting the dresses which the Princess might require. Others were handing to her Highness cases, in which she stowed away, with her own hands, her *costly* jewels, locking the receptacles, as she proceeded, with the greatest care. Then the pipe cases were brought, to be filled by the Princess with beautiful long *flawless* amber mouthpieces, of pale lemon colour, each of which was worth from seven to eight thousand piastres at the least. For these very mouthpieces I entertained a peculiar interest myself, having purchased them, by order of her Highness, when sojourning a few years previously at Istamboul. The sight of them recalled to my recollection the aged noble-looking pipe-stem merchant, from whom I had procured them, with his fine flowing beard, partially whitened by age, his full dark eyes, his aquiline

nose, and his bronzed spare arms. His figure rose again to my imagination, as I had first seen him, hard at work turning a pipe stem, by means of a species of bow used in his trade, with inconceivable rapidity. Again I saw, in my mind's eye, that dark alcove at the end of his shop, from the deep shadow of which he brought forth these precious wares. The same objects were now before me, on the point of being carefully packed up. I knew again their bright polish, their various degrees of transparency, their precise and elegant turning, and the sparkling effect of those varied shades of gold colour, which glistened beneath the brilliant rays of the sun, now glancing from their surface. In these cases also were carefully placed in rows the pipe-stems of cherry and jasmine wood, or wood of a much more precious quality, encircled by richly enamelled rings of gold, many of which, even without taking into account the diamonds and other costly jewels with which they were all gorgeously encrusted, were worth from a thousand to two thousand piastres. The bowls, made of yellow clay, which by a peculiar process of baking assumes that *terra-cotta* colour so peculiar to Eastern pipes, were being carefully wrapped in cotton wool, and placed in other cases. These receptacles were all securely locked by her Highness's own hand, with as much care as had been the jewel-boxes; and the keys were retained in her *own* possession. The reason for such nice precaution may be well understood, when it is known that the Princess Validè's collection of pipes may be valued at about six millions of piastres.

“ Her Highness’s service of plate, consisting of some silver dishes and covers, and those beautiful spoons, elegantly carved in tortoise-shell, with coral handles, or cut in boxwood, as light in design and as elaborately and exquisitely carved as the finest Chinese workmanship, which are our substitutes for the silver services of the foreigner, were now packed in their turn, in a small plate chest. As soon as all the cases were securely fastened, they were handed over to the care of one of my subordinates, who thereupon became responsible for their precious contents.

“ Condiments of every kind, necessary for so long a journey, lay scattered about in all directions, all ready for packing—some on the divans and tables—the greater portion littering the floor.

“ On the carpet, at the farther extremity of the saloon, was squatted a group of slaves, some of whom were fingering the golden shreds of tobacco, whilst others were filling with them the cigarette papers, with as much nimbleness and expedition as I had seen practised, when on my travels in Frenk lands, by the females in the French Government manufactories at Dieppe, Bordeaux, Havre, and Strasburg. In the corner opposite to them were seated several ladies of her Highness’s suite, smoking cigarettes, and chattering on the various inconveniences which they expected to endure on their pilgrimage; whilst others were sedulously plying, not their distaffs, like the *Alla Franca* dames in olden times, but their needles—yes, *Cocona*,” continued Yusuf, with a smile, addressing himself, as he perpetually did, for my special enlightenment, to me, “ genuine London needles

called Kirby's '*ne plus ultras*,' and stitching at their *ikrams* (pilgrim garbs), with as much hurried industry as if they had belonged to that greatly overworked class of Alla Franca girls, the poor needlewomen, of whose hard labours I have heard so much.

"Your Highness may not be aware," he pursued, by way of a digression, to explain his many allusions to Western lands, "that I accompanied his Highness the late Viceroy Said Pacha to England, and that I have learned, moreover, great and valuable information respecting Afrang habits and customs from that distinguished but lamented Hekim Baschi, Doctor Abbot. Circumstances threw me much in the way of that enlightened individual; and I was able to render him most valuable assistance when he commenced gathering together that most unique collection of Egyptian antiquities which now adorns a museum in *Yenkee Dooneea* (the United States of America). That clever Frenk picked up all his treasures without despoiling or mutilating any temples or other sacred buildings. Among the more valuable jewels of the collection were the antique gold-leaf earrings, carved with hieroglyphics, from deciphering which it was discovered that they had belonged to the consort of Menes, the first king of Egypt. In the centre of these works of antique art hung three lapis-lazuli pendants, and two blue glass beads capped with gold. An ancient necklace, and a bracelet twisted in the form of a lotus, both of gold, were also remarkable objects in this treasure-trove. But the *crowning gem* was that extraordinarily fine signet-ring, which originally belonged to Cheops, the founder of the Great Pyramid.

Its authenticity was fully confirmed by its bearing impressed on it the word '*Shofa*,' the name of that great monarch. The Alla Franca book-writer, Lane, has stated truly when he says that the ring was found near the Pyramids of El Yeezeh, whilst the queen's ornaments were discovered at Dendera."

"*Taib! Taib!*" rejoined the Cocona; and I possess one of those double Egyptian guineas which was dug up in the same locality. There is only one other in Europe, and that may be seen in the Soame's Museum in London.

"But to return from this long digression. The ladies of her Highness's suite, although unable to read, write, or play on musical instruments, were not, on that account, idling away their time."

I felt that this remark was again specially addressed, with a species of inuendo, to myself, the Frankish Cocona. "True, they were uneducated, nor did they possess the stately manners which characterise the ladies who attend upon the *Deity of Islam* at the Palace of the Bosphorus. But at that moment they were, or looked, patterns of industry. Surely, I thought, they must have been taught to follow the precept which the wife of the Holy Moslem Prophet Aysha inculcated, when she said, 'Tell the women what I speak. There is no woman who spins,'—the needle, in modern times, I know, has taken the place of the distaff,—'who can pray for forgiveness of her sins until she hath clothed, not only herself, but all the angels in the *seven* heavens.' As I looked upon these sempstresses, I thought how little the few *Frenk* ladies, who have been



permitted, from time to time, to enter the audience halls of the odalisques of Sultans, viceroys, princes, and pachas, without proceeding further, can know of how much exertion those quiet, sedate, and apparently impassive creatures are capable, whom they have only seen listlessly indulging in their cigarettes. They can work with their fingers assiduously, as you see. They can work with their *brains* also, frequently. They formerly were—ay, and many of them still are—the *profoundest* adepts in every species of political cabal or domestic intrigue; and even Machiavelli, that well-known Italian prince of diplomatists, of whom history speaks, had he possessed an Eastern harem, might have found his match—state-crafty and astute, as he was—in the Oriental odalisques.

“When—after having received the instructions of her Highness as to her requirements on the journey—I descended from this scene of bustle and confusion to the grand entrance hall, I found another scene of confusion below. My eyes first fell upon the form of Siah, the youngest but one of my attendants. He was dipping his white cambric pocket-handkerchief into a veritable pool of *atar-gul* (otto of roses), and actually throwing that costly essence with both his hands over his attire. The stench, as I may call it, of the perfume was almost overpowering; for when a large quantity of pure *atar-gul* is spilled on the ground, the effluvia is so strong that it becomes sickening and nauseous in the extreme. To complete the disagreeable effect of the smell, the impudent little Siah put his handkerchief to my nose. ‘*Taamléri kalder!*’ (‘Take it away!’), I exclaimed, impatiently,

to the evident astonishment of the boy, who revelled in the essence. I was about to inquire of the little wretch how he had become possessed of the valuable perfume, when, glancing my eyes downwards to the white marble floor, I beheld one of the square bottles (used also by the Germans for their delicious *liqueur Eau de Dantzic*) lying there broken into a hundred pieces. I naturally concluded that he had let it fall whilst packing up the dozen bottles which had just been put out for the use of her Highness on her journey. After shouting at the imp, '*Pekeuhkém-cekmech-der!*' ('I am very angry!') I was about to pass into the Eunuchs' Hall, when I espied, squatted down in a corner behind one of the pillars, Merakech, a tiny atom of humanity, who had not long since joined my corps from Soudan. I flourished my courbach with the intention of laying it across the shoulders of the idle little imp, when he yelled out like an infuriated monkey, '*Sizé-bir-cift-seuzum-var*' ('I have something to say to you'), and then rising, he changed his tone, and whispered in my ear that Siah had only packed up *eleven* of the bottles of atar-gul, and had purloined one with the intention of appropriating it to his own use;—how, when the little thief was about to carry it off into his own room, he (Merakech) had run against him, sent the coveted prize spinning along the floor of the grand entrance hall, and then to escape from the vengeance of the infuriated Siah, had concealed himself behind the column where I found him. My wrath was now turned upon the little rascal who had stolen the precious bottle."

At this juncture in the narrative of our venerable

Mohaddety, the head nurse, Dada, entered the room to inform us that Zeneb Khanoum, the *Princesse Epouse*, was coming to see the little Prince before his retirement to rest, as was her usual custom. On this announcement the Grand Pacha clapped his hands, and Feika appeared, bearing a small round salver, on which was laid a pair of golden spurs, exquisitely embossed; she presented them to the amiable Yusuf as baksheesh, to reward him for the pleasant manner in which he had entertained his little Highness during the evening.

“Perhaps before I take my departure, you, Khanoum Effendem,” said the Mohaddety to the Cocona, “would like to know how the fair Feika became attached to the suite of the Grand Pacha?”

“*Evet Bou nê muruvét dir Effendi*” (“Yes; you are very kind”), replied the governess.

“Well,” continued Yusuf, “you shall hear. It appears that the year before those occurrences took place which I have just related, the *Princesse Epouse* went to reside, for the benefit of her health, at the Old palace on the Bosphorus. On the morning of the termination of the Fast of the Ramadan, her Highness went to pay a ceremonial visit to the Sultana Validè (the Sultan’s mother). At the moment of her visit, the Sultana was engaged in selecting from a dozen ‘*stars of loveliness*’—whom the Jellabs of Constantinople had enticed, purchased, or kidnapped from the countries of Circassia or Georgia—a virgin of unsurpassable beauty. A Moslem’s idea of beauty, be it known to you, Khanoum Effendem, consists in symmetry of limb, not in regularity of

feature. The Padishah himself, the *son* of a slave, is not permitted to possess a wife. The all-powerful sovereign of Islam, being thus debarred from all conubial bliss, is obliged to content himself with favourites; and the Sultana Validè is wont to act the part of *match-maker* for her illustrious son. Every year, at the close of the great fast, she has the habit of presenting him with a 'pure lily,' or virgin bud, from the loveliest of terrestrial rose-trees."

"Every human being has its peculiar standard of beauty," interrupted the Cocona. "For my own part, I cannot say that I admire the taste or choice of her Highness the Sultana Validè. I have roamed through the magnificent enchanted castles of the '*Deity of Islam*,' and I have never yet beheld any of those marvellous types of Oriental beauty which are supposed by our numerous writers on the East to be caged within those retreats, [most of the odalisques of the Sultan and his Cræsus of a Viceroy, can only be looked upon as passable], once deemed so mysterious, but lately defiled and polluted by the footsteps of the *fena* Giaour. To me the wondrous beauty of the Orientals has appeared a fable. I cannot remember to have seen more than *two* Odalisques, out of nearly ten thousand, to whom I could really award the right of the term beautiful, but those are—for, *Allah Kereem*, they still adorn the Land of Pharaoh—indeed, if I may be so profane as to thus express myself, *terrestrial impersonifications* of angels. When first I gazed upon them, I felt transfixed. I never tired of admiring them. Such features, such loveliness, and such faultless shapes, no other human

forms could possibly possess. They were the *living* types of the matchless Venus of Medici, *Ajaib* (Wonderful) works of the Creator. One of these was her Highness, the wife of the late Viceroy Said Pacha, who was, in truth, the '*Queen of Beauty*,' the other, her lovely adopted daughter, the '*Comet of the East*.' These alone I considered worthy to be immortalised by the chisel of our great sculptors of the West. A few others indeed may have had pretensions to be called '*passable*,' but the majority would, to European eyes, have appeared *absolutely* ugly. After a few years most of them become mere haggard crones, fitting representatives of certain celebrities of our English nursery tales, yclept, Mothers Shipton, Redcap, Goose, and Bunch."

"A bouquet of the Jellab's flowers," continued the aged Hadji, "had been already housed for upwards of a month in the *special* conservatory of the Sultana Validè; and at the moment the *Princesse Epouse* of Egypt was ushered into the august presence, the stately Princess was employed in completing the purchase of the loveliest rose in that nosegay of rare exotics. The bargain was struck; and orders were given that the beautiful flower should be immediately transplanted to the Sultan's '*Mansion of Bliss*,' closely wrapped up in a sky-blue feredje, to screen it from the too presumptuous light of heaven. The Agha, who had the charge of the remaining tender plants, was about to convey them from the royal presence. The eyes of the Princess Zeneb fell upon an exquisite rose-bud. She admired it, and demanded the price of that delicate Georgian plant. 'A million of piastres,' replied the

eunuch. ‘*Taib! taib!*’ exclaimed the Princess at once, ‘She is mine;’ and the paras were forthwith paid to the Jellab’s deputy. When the *Princesse Epouse* returned to the old palace on the Bosphorus she was accompanied by Feika. The prize was presented to the Grand Pacha. Feika, as you know, soon became his favourite attendant. Perchance, in the accomplishment of her *kismet*, she may in future years be raised to the honour of becoming his *Buick Khanoum* (consort).

“About the time that the gorgeous nocturnal spectacle of the general illumination—which annually attracts thousands of visitors to Constantinople, and compared to which the lighting of the great Christian temple at Rome, which I once had the good fortune to witness, is but a feeble lamp—was being displayed in the metropolis of Islam and its suburbs, and on the azure Bosphorus, the Padishah, the Sultan of Turkey, was engaged in raising the protecting feredjee, and gazing on the unsurpassable loveliness of that human flower, which had been purchased for him at no less a price than thirty thousand piastres. Yet for *one* year only would the plant be left to ornament the great Sultan’s ‘*Abode of Bliss.*’ On the expiration of that brief term, the new exotic would be destined, like all the other roses of the East which had bloomed and faded within that august conservatory, to bid farewell for ever to that ivory stick against which, during its sojourn in the gilded glass-house, it had propped its drooping head. It was not doomed, however, to be caged up perpetually, pining and withering away, in that ‘Mansion of Indolence’ to which it would be conveyed. No doubt the

smiles of the Imperial Master would rarely, if ever, light on it again. But it would be allowed, by his gracious favour and generosity, to breathe the pure air of heaven, along with the other plants, thus transferred to a more natural soil, on the condition only of being always so carefully enveloped as to be screened from every mortal eye.

“It was formerly the custom,” continued Yusuf, “to transplant European exotics from their native earth. They were dug up under various pretexts, and then sold by the *jellabs* for Eastern conservatories. I have even heard it whispered that at the very time we live in efforts have been made to revive the practice.”

“*Allah-Kerem!* (‘Thanks to God!’), interrupted the Cocona, “this attempt has been vain.”

“Yes, the few horticulturists of Constantinople, Balata, and Therapia have been frustrated in their endeavours to ornament the palace of ‘The Light of the World,’ the all-powerful Sovereign of Islam, with specimens of English horticulture; and the ‘Harem Palace of Abdul Aziz’ remains adorned almost exclusively with rare flowers from Eastern lands.”

Thus saying, the aged Mohaddetyn rose, made his *temena*, and took his departure, promising to renew his reminiscences the next evening.

Delighted at this prospect, the Grand Pacha retired to rest, and soon sank into calm forgetfulness.

## CHAPTER II.

THE next evening, punctual to his appointment, the Mohaddetyn repaired to the reception-room. His Highness the Grand Pacha was greatly pleased at seeing the Kislar Agaci, and received him most graciously. The intelligent face of the prince beamed with that fascinating smile which is so peculiarly characteristic of his illustrious parent, the Viceroy Ismael Pacha. He clapped his hands with joy ; and this summons was immediately answered by little Fieka.

“ *Capouk-ol ! Chibouque kahveh getir !* ”

The whole troop of little Amazons suddenly appeared, as if by magic, and the Mohaddetyn was served with the required refreshments. Yusef sipped his findjan of coffee, and smoked his pipe, partaking at the same time of some delicious sweetmeats which were handed him.

“ *Kalder !* ” (“ Take away ! ”), exclaimed the Cocona, to whom the Prince had given the right to preside at all his *soirées*. The slaves cleared away.

The company was much more numerous than on the preceding evening. Several of the ladies of the palace occupied the divans which skirted the windows. The little Prince had given them, in his naïve manner, so



lively a description of the Kislár Agaci's talent as a Mohaddetyn, that they had been induced to beg permission of the *Princesse Epouse* to be present at his next recital.

When silence was established, Yusuf recommenced his narrative.

“Having been informed that thousands of Hadjis had encamped themselves at a short distance beyond the Palace of Abbassiah, on the confines of the desert, in the direction of Surraways (Suez), I went thither, attended by a few of my subordinates. I had arrived at the far-famed citadel, which overawes el Masr (Grand Cairo), but which is itself commanded by Mount Mokattam. Being much fatigued with my walk—for the day was sultry—I sat myself down on the parapet of the terrace, close by the house of Yoosuf Saláh-é-Deen, so imposingly situated on the slope of the yellow, rocky Mokattam height. I lighted a cigarette, and gazed with delight on the lovely and extensive view which lay before me. The panorama embraced the city, with its widely spreading palm-trees, and hundreds of tapering minarets of exquisite form—the Roomálee gate, that spot so memorable in the modern history of Egypt as that where the bold and daring Mameluke Emir Bey took, on horseback, that courageous leap, which saved him from the horrible death to which the whole of his noble race had been consigned by Mahomet Ali the Great; the mosque of the Bloody Baptism, the aqueduct, the lovely suburbs, and the town of Boulac, with its beautiful mosques and minarets. It was a scene marred only by the unsightly chimneys of the

soap, cotton, linen, and silk manufactories, and the great mounds of rubbish. To the south, as I turned, lay the palm groves close to the ruins of Memphis, and the plains of Heliopolis; the fertile valley of the Nile, peopled by a race called by the Turks and Arabs *Jino Firam* (Pharaoh's Breed), and the *jellabs*; the Seven Provinces of the Delta; and the mighty Pyramids, rising to sight in the far distance.

“Here I lingered for a while, contemplating the wondrous beauties that lay spread out before me, and wondering whether I should ever behold that cherished spot again. As I sat I became lost in my reflections on the past and present. What a transformation had come over that fortress, the old walls of which had been replaced by European innovations! What a change had taken place in the appearance of that great capital before me; still more in the manners and customs of its inhabitants, the Cairenes! I thought on the days, not so far distant, as it seemed to me, when Frenk travellers were obliged to despatch carrier pigeons from that platform to the Pacha of Aleppo, with petitions to be furnished with the escort they required to pursue their journey through the land of Egypt,—now that land was blessed with comparative security and peace, and no escort was required,—how that wonderful *tele-cem* (talisman) of the Unbelievers, the telegraph, had supplanted those winged messengers of yore;—and, as I thus reflected, I involuntarily ejaculated, ‘*Ajaib! Ajaib! Mashallah! Mashallah! Atham-dil-lil-lak*’ (‘Wonderful! Wonderful! Well done! Well done! Praise be to God!’)

“Then my mind went back to the time when the great renovator of the country’s greatness, Yoosuf-Saláh-é-Deen, to whom even the Christian crusaders have awarded this great and well-merited renown, here held his warlike court, surrounded by his far-famed warrior-grandees. I could almost imagine, in the dream which fell on me, that I could hear him urging on his soldiers to attack the Christian camp, and exclaiming in the words of the Italian poet—

‘On then! come on! I first will cleave a path  
Through the grim guards within the entered wall.  
Let all swords strike like mine! Pattern your wrath  
By mine—by mine your cruelty and gall!’

Then, again, my mind reverted to the days when the fortress was occupied by the Mameluke Sultans, and poignant agonies of regret filled my soul on beholding the ruins of those old walls, which were shattered by the explosion of a powder-magazine, during the rule of Mahomet Ali the Great, now patched together with Alla Franca innovations of bastions and curtains.

“I shook off my reflections, and I rose. I visited the large square room, erroneously called by *somahins* (travellers), ‘Joseph’s Hall,’ which in reality was constructed by the Sultan Ibu-Kalú-oon, and never graced the palace of the great Saláh-é-Deen. There it was, still intact in much of its proportions, with its thirty-two rose-coloured columns, the gilding of which still had an air of freshness, although the capitals, covered with hieroglyphics, lay scattered around in all directions. Then I gazed once more on the lofty walls of the Citadel, and endeavoured to picture to myself the scene, so

animated by movement and bustle it may have presented when the Pachas of Constantinople resided, along with their numerous retinues, within its precincts, and made it, as the Ingelez did their Tower of London in olden times, 'a town within a city.'

"My eye was just riveted on the effigy of an eagle on the western wall, when I heard the tread of approaching footsteps, and looking round beheld the figure of a venerable Dervish. From his garb, which consisted of that brown home-spun woollen robe, with large hanging sleeves, which is called the *zaabut*, I knew him to be one of those wandering priests, who squatting apart, and repeating their *namaz*, are ever smoking, drink the same muddy water as the camel from leathern buckets, and eat that indigestible stuff, the *kakk* (a sort of oriental plum pudding), when they can get it, or, if not, their bread and garlic; observing, however, with orthodox rigidity the rule never to partake of food, or at all events to do so most sparingly, before visiting the mosque or attending any meeting for public prayer. He had evidently been watching me for some time, and had remarked the curiosity with which I had looked upon the image of that monarch of the air, built so strangely into the wall. Startled as I was from my reverie, I was almost inclined to greet him with the objurgation of '*Ruch kef!*' ('Go to the—old gentleman!'), but he forestalled me by exclaiming, '*Ajaib! Ajaib!* I will impart to thee the legend of that mysterious effigy, still believed, far and wide, throughout the country. When the city is threatened by some sure and impending danger, there proceeds from that

effigy an awful *shriek*, which is heard by all the inhabitants, and warns them to depart. The eagle was the banner of Karakoosh, the celebrated vizier and buffoon of Saláh-é-Deen, whose drolleries, as well as his reckless licentiousness, made him the sport of the Osmanli, and have handed him down to posterity as that *karagheuz* (Punch), which is looked upon as a caricature of the extraordinary favourite of that great sovereign.'

"' *Ayva, ayva* ' (' Even so, even so '), I replied. Then, believing my visitant to be a *maskaihh* (holy man) on his pilgrimage to Mekkah, I gave him a *kis* (purse) to help him on his *tarikaf* (road to heaven), and thus we parted.

"I may here remark that the office of buffoon, or court jester, is still perpetuated in the retinue of the Grand Seignior. Once when I visited the Sultan's palace on the Bosphorus, during the Bairam, I observed among the attendants of the Padishah, on the occasion of his proceeding to the Great Mosque to perform his devotions, a small fat dwarf, of strangely savage aspect, riding on a richly caparisoned and gigantic horse, which his stunted legs were scarcely able to bestride. He was attired in the court costume of a Pacha. I quickly learned that this singular individual occupied towards his sovereign lord a position similar to that held, it is said, by the jester of the Middle Ages towards the Alla Franca kings. The Padishah, the refuge of the world, held him, as I heard, in high esteem. He was reputed to be exceedingly clever in availing himself of the niceties afforded by the

Turkish language for the making of puns, and giving strange turns to the sense of words. For this peculiar species of drollery the language is rich in resources; the alteration of a letter, or the misplacement of an accent, frequently changed the whole meaning of a word, turning it into an absurdity, or giving it a meaning not always meet for nice ears to hear. Of this facility the Sultan's *sootaree* (jester), as I was informed, never failed to take due advantage, his jokes and sallies of ingenious wit calling forth peals of laughter, not only from '*The Light of the World*,' but equally from his arrogant, corpulent satellites, who pride themselves so greatly on their general impassiveness, and the lean, hard-worked, poorly clad, careworn functionaries and officials, to whom the relishing of a joke would seem an utter impossibility. Another duty belonging to the office of the *sootaree*, it appeared, was to stand behind the throne at the Bairam, watch the whole proceedings and satirise as he pleased.

“When again alone I found myself once more plunged into a reverie. I was pondering over the changes effected by time and circumstance in the palace where the present Princess Validé of Egypt, the widow of the gallant Ibrahim Pacha, and the illustrious grandmother of your Highness, now occupies her noble suit of apartments, and where the Viceregal Court is held. Changes indeed had come in that palace since the days of former splendour. Its apartments are split up for multifarious usages. Here is now the residence of the government officials. Here, too, the mint, where *paras* are now only coined for the Harems, and whence, in certain days gone

by, more *base* piastres were issued than sterling Egyptian sovereigns. Here is also a cannon foundry. Here, again, is that printing establishment, still maintained by government at an enormous outlay, although feebly conducted, and rarely turned to any practical use. From this press it was that your illustrious great-grandfather, Mahomet Ali, caused a newspaper called the *Boulak Independent* to be issued. In order to support it the Egyptian and European government officials were duly mulcted of their pay for subscriptions. But the paper, nevertheless, soon died a natural death, as did its successor, the *Egyptian Times*, in later days. The subscribers received no copies; and the well remunerated editor, a long-headed Scotchman, walked off to his native land with his baksheesh and a somewhat damaged character. In the same building, likewise, are now an arsenal, a manufactory of arms, the workshops for military equipments, and other public works.

“Not wishing to leave Cairo without visiting again that superb mosque which the illustrious grandsire of your Highness, Mahomet Ali the Great, had erected, that structure which the Frenklers term, in their strange idiom, the ‘*lion*’ of the quarter, I now turned my steps in that direction. Under its arches, as I approached it, were squatted multifarious groups of beggars, wrapped in variegated rags, who had literally made of its courts ‘the refuge of the homeless,’ and, scorning all fear of the *carvasses*, slept on the mosque steps the sleep of security, just as I have seen a similar race lying in unconscious repose beneath the porches of Christian temples in southern European lands.

Leaving my overshoes, and even my slippers, at the gates, out of profound respect for the great regenerator of Egypt, I entered barefooted the structure which the Cairenes regard as the 'Wonder of Cairo.'"

"By the Frenklers, however," interrupted the Cocona, "the building is criticised as an evidence of the degeneracy of architectural taste in Egypt. They condemn the style of the construction, as blending together, in nondescript and most incongruous fashion, Italian, Greek, Saracenic, and Moorish schools of architecture. The mosque is built, it must be admitted, of the finest Oriental alabaster, the amber tint of which bestows on it the appearance of opal. But all the more is it to be regretted, from the Frenk point of view, that the architect made no better use of the magnificent materials at his command."

"The marble is exquisitely beautiful," continued Yusef, bowing his head gently to this critical interruption, but bent on giving due praise to the object of his admiration. "The pavement is covered by one of the richest Persian carpets ever woven, over which no shoe has ever trod. The alabaster columns, the exquisite fountains, the slender minarets loftily piercing the sky, all combine to bestow on this noble structure the air of a temple of enchantment.

"Fortunately I had a few paras in my possession, and on turning to depart, more especially as I was so soon to enter on my holy pilgrimage, I distributed baksheesh to the *shâter* (learned) Imam, who was standing near the entrance repeating his prayers, attired in the long cloth garment so peculiar to the learned men



of the East. Scarcely, however, had I quitted the precincts of the holy place, and whilst I was still in the act of putting on the coverings of my feet, I heard the whole brotherhood of Imams squabbling among themselves respecting the division of that propitiation I had made to the sovereign ruler of Egypt, the mighty Prince Baksheesh. And thus it was that I left that noble edifice, which serves as a most magnificent mausoleum for the ashes of the ever-memorable and highly-gifted founder of your Highness's illustrious dynasty."

"*Taib! Taib!*" exclaimed the Cocona. Then turning to the Grand Pacha, she explained to him that the remains of one of his sisters, the daughter of his illustrious *baba* (father), but not by her Highness his mother, had been placed in the same costly mausoleum.

"*Né moutloüyem, madame*" ("I am happy to hear it"), replied the little Prince. Then, pausing for a moment, as though at a loss what to say, he added, "What a lovely rosebud poor Tafeedah must now be in the beautiful parterres of the Harem Paradise of the Prophet!" This poetical expression sprang from the superstitious belief entertained by all Moslems that when children die very young they are transformed into beautiful flowers, destined to ornament the gardens of *corkam* (paradise).

"*Mafesh! Mafesh!*" ("Nonsense! Nonsense!"), "my Prince!" interposed la Gouvernante.

"*Hutta! guéreet dir, Khanoum efendem!*" ("Indeed, but it is quite true"), hastily objected Yusuf. "Did you not witness the obsequies of the amiable young Princess?"

“No!” replied the Cocona. “Their Highnesses the Princesses had offered me their permission so to do, but I declined.”

“Then, if it pleases you,” continued the Kishlar Agaci, “I will narrate to you the manner in which they were performed. On the day of the death of the young Princess the Viceroy’s mother was aroused by wailings, which proceeded from the apartments adjoining her own harem in the citadel. These sounds of lamentation were uttered by the slaves of the dying child, even before the breath had left her little body. The Princess Validé hastened to the chamber, ordered silence, and administered with her *own* hand the usual restoratives, but all was in vain. The head of the fading sufferer was turned towards Mekkah, and as the spirit departed, and the eyes of the little Princess were closed, the most woeful lamentations were recommenced. Piercing shrieks resounded through the harem, until the awful death-cry went forth to all the inmates of the palace. The coverings of the cushions and divans, as well as the carpets and mats on the floor, were immediately turned upside down, and orders were issued to all the female inmates of the palace to unbraid their hair, and to abstain forthwith from wearing jewellery, or using any perfumes, henna, or kohl. After an ablution of the body, according to the usual rites performed previously to prayer, the cleansing of the mouth and nose being alone omitted, it was again washed with warm water, in which lote-tree leaves had been boiled, with perfumed Syrian soap. The eyes were closed, the jaw was bound, and the nostrils were stuffed with

cotton. The body was then sprinkled with a mixture composed of rose-water, powdered camphor, and lote-tree-leaf decoction. The ancles were bound together; the hands placed across the breast. The corpse was attired in magnificent apparel, and wrapped in a superb Cashmere shawl; the bier was then brought, on which it was laid, and all was covered by another costly Cashmere shawl. The head of the bier was surmounted by a glittering tiara of diamonds. The harem was hung throughout with cloths of black and blue, the colours of Moslem mourning; and the relatives and friends of the departed Princess were speedily occupied in breaking all the elegant china drinking-cups and sherbet glasses which had belonged to her Highness, according to our customary Moslem rite on occasions of mourning and death.

“The funeral ceremony was at hand, and the Grand Eunuch belonging to the Princess Validé despatched his *sardeg*s (brother eunuchs) to command the attendance of the ladies belonging to the harems of all the notables among the Cairenes. When the final obsequies took place, the heads of the grandees preceded the procession, followed by the chanters of the Koran. Immediately behind the bier rode the ladies on large donkeys, followed, in their turn, by a host of females on foot, who uttered piercing shrieks, as though their cries might serve to rouse the dead, and flung their arms and bodies to and fro. Before the bier were driven a herd of buffaloes, destined for slaughter after the interment, when their carcasses were to be given away amongst the poor. Camels also were led along laden with bread and water, which was to be distributed to the thronging crowd. Eunuchs

carried bottles filled with scented water, which they sprinkled around them as they walked, whilst others waved high in the air their silver censers emitting the thick vapour of burning frankincense and other perfumes. On arrival at the mosque, the body was conveyed to the viceregal sepulchre. A rich Cashmere shawl was spread on the bottom of the vault, another was rolled into a pillow, and on these two the corpse, when taken from the bier, was laid, and covered with a third shawl of costly fabric. After this ceremony the mourners all quitted the vault—the mosque reverberated for a time with the frantic shrieks of the women—and then the door was closed on the remains of the amiable little Princess, cut off so early in her bloom.

“But to resume my narrative. The day was sultry and hazy when I visited the mosque. My lips were parched with thirst; and as no *cahvené* was at hand, I bent my way to *Bir Yusuf* (Joseph’s Well), so named after the renowned *Saláh-é-Deen*. On reaching the entrance, I lighted the wax candle in my pocket paper lantern, and descended the deep, gradually-winding slant of that beautiful specimen of a rock tank, a legion of which may be seen in India. I then took my small silver cup—which I always carry with me—out of my pocket, and dipping it into one of the earthen jars on the *sakia* (water-wheel) at the top of the upper shaft, I obtained a most delicious draught of icy-cold pure water. This water is the same as that of which your Highness constantly partakes.”

“Yes,” interrupted the Cocona; “but with this exception:—Occasionally the supply brought into the

harem is too short, and then Nile water, impregnated with rosemary, has to be substituted."

*Apropos* of this observation, I may as well remark, in my own person, that when I was last in Alexandria, I heard complaints from all my acquaintances, whether European or Moslem, on the abuse of the water-supply system, of which crying evil they were the victims. Many had been kept for four-and-twenty hours without any supply of that great necessity of life. The remedy for this nuisance, however, is within the immediate reach and control of the local government. Let it appoint a sanitary board, with full powers to compel all owners of house property to have water laid on to each dwelling, and distributed in each story by the Waterworks Company, to which the Viceroy, Ismael Pacha, with the best intentions, made most advantageous concessions; let it appoint a surveyor to see that all the requirements for health and cleanliness are properly supplied. As it is, the guild of *sakkas*, or water-carriers, hold every householder at their mercy. This guild is composed of a set of most unconscionable rogues, who pocket their *paras*, but serve their customers with their daily supply, or leave them unserved, according to their whim. Should they not feel disposed to bring the quantity duly bargained for, no substitute is to be found. The only redress to be obtained by the householder is by an appeal to the local police authorities: and how little Turkish officials can be made to move, even in an affair of life and death, is too well known. The only real reform for this state of things lies in an effort on the part of the

Egyptian Government to abolish the guild and compel the Water-works Company to take such advantage of the concession granted it, as will benefit the public at large, and secure their shareholders a more respectable dividend.

“Close at hand, as I drank,” proceeded Yusuf, “were a host of sakkas, who were filling their *zem-zemijah* (goat-skins) with the water of the famous well, and then discharging it into casks, which were to be sent to Suez by the just-completed railway, and transferred on board the frigate, under orders to convey the Princess Validé of Egypt, Fatimah *Khanoum*, to Yambu, the port of El Medinah. As I looked on these two-legged movable water machines, I could not but wonder why small water carts, drawn by mules, similar to those I had seen in use in the city of Florence, had never been substituted for such troublesome human engines. Often had I watched these Arabs, with their skins tucked under their arms, like the music pipes of some European countries, squirting the water in all directions on the roads and pavement with as much dexterity and expertness as fire-brigades with their long hose in France or England. Frequently, too, had I seen them, in their insolence, drenching to the skin any unlucky novice of an European who was strolling in the hot dusty street, unconscious of the wiles of the Alexandrian water-carrier, and then grinning with delight in their sleeves, to think how they had compelled the *el-kelb-Nasrá-nee* (‘dog of a Christian’) to fly before the true believer.

“Feeling refreshed by my draught of delicious

water, I repaired to one of the Government offices in the citadel, in order to give instructions to the guardian of the Egyptian *Machmal* (the emblem of royalty) to have that conveyance fitted up in the most gorgeous manner possible, for the transport of the Princess Validé to Mekkah.

“As your Highness may be unacquainted with the origin of that ‘banner of the Hadjis,’ I will relate the legend for your amusement. I have gathered my information, I must add, from the account of it given by the celebrated Afrang traveller, Lane, in his book on ‘The Modern Egyptians.’ Here he tells how a beautiful Turkish female slave, commonly called ‘She-ge-ed-Durr’ (Tree of Pearls), became the favourite wife of the Sultan Es-Sháleh Negm-ed-Deen, and on the death of his son, with whom terminated the dynasty of the house of Eiyob, caused herself to be acknowledged Queen of Egypt. How she had a magnificent *hódag*. (covered litter) constructed, and fitted to a camel’s back when about to perform the holy pilgrimage; and how, in after years, this litter was sent empty with the caravan, merely as an emblem of royal state, until it became the custom for each succeeding Prince of Egypt to despatch, with each year’s caravan of pilgrims, a similar *hódag*, which received the name of *Machmal*, *Machmil*, or *Mamel*; and kings of other Moslem countries followed the example. The destiny of the Princess who originated the practice was a fearful one, as related by the Afrang author. The wretched woman caused her own son to be put to death, and then abdicated the throne in favour of El Melik El Mo’ezz, whom she

married. Neglected by this king as she grew advanced in years, she had him too murdered. In turn, however, she was delivered by her step-son, his successor, into the hands of his mother, who burned to revenge her own wrongs on her great rival. By the orders of this woman, who looked on during the execution, she was beaten to death with wooden clogs by slaves. Then her body was stripped naked, and thrown over the walls of the citadel to the dogs. It was saved, however, from this degrading fate by one of her own eunuchs, who took it up and buried it in the tomb she had erected for herself.

“After a hasty visit to the Viceregal Harem, which stands behind the mosque of Mahomet Ali the Great, for the purpose of ordering my subordinates to prepare the apartments for the occupation, that same evening, of her Highness, with her ladies and slaves, preparatory to their departure for Surraways (Suez), I returned to the residence of the guardian of the Egyptian Machmal. The name, I may here say, is presumed by Egyptians to have been derived from the time when the daughters of the Sultan Mamelukes proceeded to Mekkah in a similar conveyance. The vehicle stood in the court-yard. It was covered, on this occasion, with a crimson cloth, elaborately embroidered in gold. The top was surmounted by a large silver knob. Close at hand stood the richly-caparisoned beautiful white dromedary, selected to convey her Highness the Princess Fatimah to El-Hejaz. As I gazed with admiration on the noble animal, which was as spotless as those elephants worshipped, we are told, in the country of Siam as the representative of the divinity, the driver approached,



and whispered confidentially in my ear that the *kismet* of the fortunate beast, after he had performed the sacred journey, would be to pass the remainder of his days in indolence and plenty.

“The next morning, at early dawn, the booming of the cannon from the battery at the citadel, announced to the Carienes that the pilgrims had begun to assemble for their march. The Egyptians as well as the Turks,” pursued Yusef with a smile towards me, “display an extraordinary love, I must admit, for burning gunpowder, and making fulminating reports on all public occasions. As soon as the slaves had fastened the Machmal to the dromedary’s back, the beast was led away from the citadel in great pomp along that narrow rocky defile, once the principal scene of the extermination of the Mamelukes by Mahomet Ali the Great, and thus to the Báb-è-Nasr, which, like most of the other gates of Cairo, is a noble structure of two square towers. Hence the royal vehicle was conveyed in grand procession, attended by a great train of hadjis, and accompanied by myself and a strong escort of mysardeggs, through the suburb to the centre of the capital.

“The procession was headed by one of the best regiments of the Egyptian infantry, attired in new Nizam uniform, as well men as officers. The admirable training of the French officers employed in the Egyptian service had rendered their discipline perfect. Then followed the principal officers of state, both civil and military, in full official costume, together with a crowd of Moslem grandees, arrayed in holiday attire. Scholars also, chiefly from the colleges of Kasr El Ainee and

Taréekht-el-Mówloweéh increased the throng of the procession. Then came rushing on a herd of howling, dancing dervishes, with screeching yells and frantic antics. Among the most conspicuous of the individuals who followed were two fantastically attired dervishes, with drawn scimitars in their hands, simulating at intervals a mock combat, and a *sootaree* (buffoon) in sheepskin garments, wearing a high conical black cap adorned with gilt bells on his head, and a long twisted beard of hemp, and brandishing in one hand a cane, whilst in his left he held a roll of parchment, on which he pretended to inscribe his *firman*.

“The day was sultry in the extreme. The sun burned scorchingly, while not a zephyr fanned the fiery air. Yet thousands on thousands of Cairenes of all classes thronged the line of march and boldly braved the dangerous influence of the heated atmosphere to witness their great annual public *fantasia* of the departure of the hadjis.

“You may not be aware, *Khanoum Effendem*,” said the Mohaddetyn, turning to the Cocona, “that this word ‘*fantasia*’ is one of the strangest and most expansive used by modern Moslems. It is employed to express any fine ornament, or unusual change of dress, as well as every kind of entertainment, amusement, or show, within or without the harem, public or private. These *fantasia*, in the latter sense, however, at which women are specially permitted to be present, are properly only birth-feasts, marriage festivals, and funerals.

“A busy and variegated picture,” pursued Yusuf, “was presented in the great square. Here might be

seen the *berberis*, that most useful class of cunning, intelligent knaves, with their broad shoulders, crooked legs, and dogged countenances, hurrying about in all directions, armed with the *Courbach*, the Egyptian whip of many thongs. In some spots might be observed groups of Moslem devotees engaged in prayer, in strikingly expressive attitudes, with their faces turned towards Mekkah in the far East, and showing to the world by their solemn demeanour that their minds were wholly abstracted from all worldly things, and intent alone on thoughts of heaven. Cries from these devotees of '*Allah il Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah!*' continually reverberated on the air, conveying to the mind that sense of awe always bestowed by the simple and impressive religious ceremonies of the Moslems. Then arose, too, the shouts of '*Allah hou! Allah hou!*' from the Arab carriers of burdens, as they passed these would-be *welees* (saints). Against some of the *sibeels* (fountains) stood knots of Fellah women, handsome in person, graceful in figure, and stately in deportment, with their characteristic sphinx-like faces, attired in their plain, long, blue cotton gowns, and wearing the *izars* (head-veils), encircled by rolled rings of rag, on which they poised their pitchers or bundles. Women, mounted on diminutive donkeys, enveloped in *hábarahs* and veiled to the eyes, were trotting about here and there, to the great discomfiture of the pedestrians, already almost choked with the clouds of dust which arose around them, and settled so densely on all the shrubs and palm trees, that their leaves were changed in colour to the tint of *kerife* (brick-dust). On all sides swarmed

batches of mischievous, unruly urchins, armed with cudgels, with which their delight was to belabour any unfortunate *Nazranee* (Christian) or *Yahóodee* (Jew) who might cross their path; and, in their turn, continually pursued by the *Caravasses* (police). Here and there were pushing to and fro herds of donkey-boys, driving before them their sure-footed and patient, yet spirited, beasts, and vociferating in the polyglot language they have acquired, 'Fine donkey, sir!' '*Bon áne, monsieur! Buon asino, signore!*' Omnibuses, too, were running to and from the railway stations, and telegraph messengers bustling their way, on donkey-back, through the dense, seething, waving crowd. Camels, too, to increase the general bustle and confusion, came tramping on in files; some bearing heavy burdens slung in cord nets across their backs; others individuals perched aloft. Ice and sherbet vendors pushed through the throng, clinking their glasses to attract the attention of the parched. Vendors of fruit, too, were disposing of their wares, consisting of fresh-water melons, cut in slices, bananas, pomegranates, peaches, grapes, lemons, mulberries, almonds, sugar cane, and dates, both fresh and preserved; and flower sellers were driving a good trade with their roses, white and red,—roses, you must know, *Khanoum Effendem*, were always the delight of us Easterns, being considered by the ancient Egyptians as the symbol of silence, and of all virtue and loveliness by the poets,—and freely disposing of admirably arranged nosegays of other favourite flowers, such as *Fághiyehs* (*Lavsonia inermis*), violets, myrtles, anemones, narcissuses, sweet

basil, gilliflowers,—yellow, white, and purple,—and sprigs of Oriental willow. No nation, you may be aware, Cocona, understands so well the Language of Flowers as the Moslems, and especially that veiled and unknown portion of the population, which you so well know makes that art a peculiar study. In one quarter were collected groups of buffoons and itinerant dancers, dressed, although males, in Almée attire, riveting the gaze of the vast crowd of idlers. One of these wandering buffoons in particular greatly attracted the attention of the passing pilgrims, and created roars of laughter by the pungent jibes with which he answered the remarks of the old jester. Now again he amused his audience with impromptu verses, accompanying himself on the *Tarabouka* (drum). Here and there, too, might be seen many a poor lunatic, hideous in countenance and fantastically dressed, squatted on the ground, and begging *buksheesh* of the wealthy pilgrims as they passed along; nor were their prayers for charity ever allowed to remain unrewarded. We Moslems, lady, reverence the insane, and invariably respect all their vagaries, for we look on their aberrations of mind not as a visitation of Allah, as is thought in other lands, but as an inspiration from above. *Paras* were liberally showered on them by all the devout as they went by.

“Anon, in the midst of the already sweltering crowd approached a wedding procession. It was that of a civil functionary of high rank. In front marched a brass band and a host of professional jesters. Then came numerous *sakkas* carrying goatskins filled with water; these were followed by several *arabas* (country carts)

freighted with men dressed as Almées, *sayherdjis* (magicians), coffee brewers, sweetmeat vendors, pancake makers, and other purveyors of good eating and drinking. Then came a host of civil and military officers, eunuchs mounted on richly caparisoned horses, and ladies of the harem and their *oustas* in carriages drawn by two horses. Behind this long procession followed the bride, seated in a handsome carriage, the blinds of which were closely drawn, and attended by a band of music consisting of drums and pipes. The whole array was closed by a crowd of females shrieking forth their *zagharèets* (cries of joy) in shrill discordant sounds.

“Marriages, you must know,” said the Mohaddetyn, interrupting himself, and addressing the Cocona, “are brought about by the mothers of the harems, or by *kha’tibehs* (professional betrothers), the latter of whom are remunerated for their services. The law certainly *allows* a Moslem to see the face of the woman previously to his making his contract. But this privilege is *never*, in any instance, accorded to the higher classes, although constantly enjoyed by the lower.

“Meanwhile,” pursued Yusuf, resuming his broken narrative, “the *kahmevs* (cafés) were carrying on a mighty trade. The lines of wooden divans and rush-bottomed chairs placed around their wooden tables were crowded with idlers, taking their findjans of fragrant Mocha coffee, or sipping glasses of refreshing sherbet. Most were puffing at their narghilés, chibouques, cigars, and cigarettes, whilst many had already sunk into a state of dreamy forgetfulness. Around these social *al fresco* establishments the air was thoroughly impregnated

with the fumes of latakia, tombeki, javach, orta, dokan-aklen, and coarse sert. *Kavedjis* (coffee-house keepers) were rushing to and fro, responding to the incessant clapping of hands from their numerous customers by serving findjans of coffee, or offering pieces of live charcoal, held by small pairs of pincers, in obedience to the cry of '*Bir-atach!*' (A light here!') The *tutingis* (tobacconists) must have coined paras that day, for besides the motley groups of men, were others of women also; not only the 'unveiled,' but the strictly veiled, enveloped in their *feredjes* (Turkish cloaks) of all the varied colours of an Eastern rainbow, and their pure white *yashmacks* (veils), who were all looking on those engaged in emitting sparks, like myriads of fire-flies, from their pipes, cigars, and cigarettes.

"To many Moslems it was an original sight to behold the male Cairenes and friends of the hadjis, who had mustered in great force, seated like so many Europeans on wooden benches and *kursis* (chairs). This practice has been an innovation of later years in Moslem customs. But still you know," pursued Yusuf, addressing himself to the Cocona, "that all Turkish, Arab, and Egyptian women, not even excepting their Highnesses the Princesses, are still expected to double themselves up, by cunning dislocation of their limbs, on their divans, and that those who defy propriety, and attempt to adopt the Frenk fashion, arrive at no better result than making themselves look like hens at roost upon their perches.

"The shade of the spreading sycamore trees renders the Esbekieh (*Uzkebeëh*), where all these groups were

seated *al fresco*, one of the most sheltered, and, barring the villainous odours which abound, one of the most pleasant places of public resort. It was once celebrated as the spot where Mahomet Ali the Great, Ibrahim Pacha, and Abbas Pacha delighted to sit and smoke their chibouques in public. But these days are passed and gone. Alas! The Viceroy, your illustrious father, loves only to *seclude* himself within the walls of his palace."

"It is the bad state of sewerage in the city," interrupted the Cocona, "that renders the Esbekieh so disagreeable a locality at times; and much as tobacco is repugnant to me, I admit that it is only when the air is redolent with the fumes of the 'golden leaf plant' that the place is bearable."

"It is reported, however, *Khanoum Effendem*," replied the aged Hadji, "that his Highness Ismael Pacha has in contemplation to enclose the space and make it a pleasant boon as well as an ornament to the inhabitants of the capital. A few years ago this great square of the '*Quarter of the Frank*,' which was then in the form of a vast shell, was exposed to the inundations of the Nile, and occasionally swamped into a lake. Owing, however, to the exertions of Mahomet Ali the Great, who caused it to be surrounded by that deep canal, the Khalis, and directed the construction of its banks, lined with rows of shady trees, it has assumed its present cheerful aspect. Now the possibility of the former inundations is thus precluded. On the subsiding of the waters the beautiful verdant plain, on which the flower of that formidable Egyptian army, commanded by



your illustrious grandsire, Ibrahim Pacha, went through their manœuvres, was left. It has thus become to the Egyptians what the French call their *Champ de Mars*; whilst on the canal, lined with its handsome palaces, float the magnificent *dahabiëhs* (barges) of the Turkish and Egyptian grandees. One of the palaces on the western side has been erected on the site of the residence of El-Elfee, the distinguished Mameluke Bey, which subsequently became memorable as the headquarters of that illustrious hero, Napoleon the Great, and in the gardens of which his famous General Kleber was assassinated. The bridges across the canal, which is supposed to be of ancient Roman construction, are now lined with shops, after the fashion of the Ponte Vecchio which I have seen at the Italian capital, Florence, so that pedestrians cannot see the water which flows beneath.

“Outside the kahvenés, and at their doors,” resumed the Mohaddetyn, “were seated a host of turbaned, impassive Turks, indolent Egyptians, fez on head, and impulsive Arabs, wearing tarbooshes. Many of the younger Moslems were engaged in their favourite game of dominoes, puffing away, as they studied their play, at narghilés filled with Persian tombeki, the inhalation of which is considered so conducive to poetic reverie. Near them, at different points, were the Mohaddetyns, reciting verses or tales of stirring Oriental adventure, as racy and original as the far-famed ‘Arabian Nights’ Entertainments.’ These latter tales your Highness knows full well, as I see by that smile.”

“Yes!” interrupted a Lady of the Harem near the Cocona. “All the little slaves of his Highness know them

by heart to the letter, and are wont to amuse the Prince by their recital, until he falls asleep over their interest."

"*Taib! Taib!*" chimed in the Grand Pacha, laughing right merrily.

"Files of infantry," continued the venerable Yusuf, "lined the sides of the square, with orders to keep the centre clear. The difficulties of such a task were great indeed. Just as I entered the square with my *sardegs* the funeral procession of the wealthy Mucheviri Pacha was passing on its way. This was headed by a host of hired mourners, chanting, with mighty lungs, a funeral dirge. It was with their peculiar-trotting step that the chanters emerged from one of the approaches which led to the palace of the defunct Effendi. He had breathed his last only a few minutes before. Yes! It is a popular belief among Moslems that the soul suffers the tortures of purgatory until the funeral rites be duly performed; and, consequently, the corpse, lying on its bier, covered with costly Cashmere shawls, was being hurried to the grave with all that precipitation with which the 'Sons of the Faithful' hasten to inter their departed.

"These mercenary mourners rent the air with their screams and howls. Far above all the many noises of the crowd rose their frantic shrieks, intermingled with cries of praise:—'How wide were the trousers of the defunct! What a turban he wore! How fine and full was his *aba* (cloak)! What a richly-caparisoned steed he rode! What a magnificent pipe he smoked! How resplendent were the jewels encrusted in the *kandjar* (dagger) thrust into his superb Cashmere kummerbund!

*Janum! Janum! No Beylerbey* (Bey of Beys) could have coveted a handsomer! Soon will he be in *Corkam* (Paradise)! *Allah il Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah!* And hundreds of voices took up in chorus the cry, '*Allah il Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah!*' A large proportion of these hired lamenters consisted of 'unveiled' women, their faces plastered over with the slime of the Nile, their long hair hanging down their shoulders in dishevelled locks, and their feet bare. In their hands they carried reeds, with which, as they trotted onwards on their strange course, they scourged themselves. Many of them were so demonstrative in their assumed grief, that they foamed at the mouth as if seized with epileptic fits. The Giaours, who were present at the spectacle, and witnessed their outrageous and almost maniacal gestures, must doubtless have thought they were demented." This latter remark was again addressed to the Cocona.

"A young Moslem exquisite, who was standing by me, just as my path was hemmed by the funeral procession, informed me, with an air of pride, that the Pacha had expired on a gorgeous divan in the salamlick, where he was accustomed to receive his visitors. I looked at him, and replied in the words of the poet,—

'What matter, mortal man, when thou art dying,  
If on a throne, or on the earth, thou then art lying?'

"At last the funeral procession had passed on to the *Hobbeh* (City of the Dead), situated to the north of the capital; and the gun, which was to accompany the pilgrimage, was allowed to proceed, escorted by a troop of Nizam infantry. This gun is a small brass field-piece,

which is carried with the caravan, and fired, on all occasions, as a signal to direct the movements of the Hadjis. *One* gun denotes that the time has come for striking the tents; *two* guns give the order to march. Again, the cannon is fired to command a short halt; and then the *fárrash* (tent-pitchers) hurry forward to prepare the place of encampment. *Three* guns mark the approach to any station; the *one* gun at night denotes the halt.

“In the rear of the gun was borne the *kiswah* or *kesoura* (the curtain placed around the Prophet’s tomb), which had been brought in great state from the mosque of El Hassaneen, situated to the east of the capital. This sacred curtain was composed of eight different pieces, of a mixed silk and cotton texture, the seams of which were skilfully concealed by a *hizam*, or broad band, made of four stripes, so sewn together as to give it the appearance of one woven fabric. On two of the stripes were worked ‘the *throne verselets*’ of the Kuran; on the two others the titles of the Sultan Abdul Medjid, at that time the reigning Padishah, the Light of the World, and the Baba of Islam; the rich embroidery giving the whole, at a little distance, the appearance of one broad gold band. On the other portions of the *kiswah* were worked, in red silk and gold, several prayers, intermixed with the Moslem magic number, seven, denoting the seven great chapters in the Koran, embroidered in large *Tumar* characters.

“This curtain, like all those sent of late years, had been worked by the Baitel-Saidi family, at the El Khurmfish manufactory of the Tumar Bad el Shauriyah,

at Cairo. It was spread out on the back of a richly caparisoned camel, whose reward for depositing his precious burden at the gate of the *Kaabah* was to be, as in the case of the white dromedary I have already mentioned, a state of blissful indolence for the remainder of his days. The *kesoura* was lined with white satin, and edged with thick white twisted cords, by which it was to be suspended in the temple.

“Behind this sacred curtain was similarly borne the *burkat-el kaabah*, the veil, which was designed to cover the doorway to the entrance, gorgeously embroidered in gold.

“Both of these new garments of the ‘*Bride of Mekkah*’ were declared by all beholders to be almost as resplendent in magnificence as on the celebrated occasion, when, according to the illustrious Arab poet, Abd-el-Rahim, ‘the *kaabah* appeared to be decked with miraculous symbols.’ The Ingleez officer Burton—the same who has laughed at the beards of the Moslemah by masquerading it at Medinah and Mekkah in the garb of an Indian Hakim—has conjectured, not without some reason perhaps, that the rite of curtaining the holy *kaabah* led to the custom of our Moslem women being veiled. Like our females, too, the sacred edifice is guarded by members of my own fraternity.

“As the superb bridal garments passed along, a crowd of spectators of both sexes, and of all ranks and ages, pressed around, holding out their white handkerchiefs, in the hope that they might be wafted by the breeze, which had fortunately just sprung up on the banks of the canal, against the precious sacred cloths.

“Then, on a noble Arab barb, came the Sheik, in a state of *semi-nudity*, rolling his head as he rode, like the toys representing the Mandarins of China; and then a crowd of Turkish and Egyptian Grandees, mounted on their prancing spirited steeds. Before the horses' heads of the latter ran their *sais* (grooms), to clear the way. After these great ones of the Land of the Pyramids followed a herd of humbler individuals on diminutive donkeys, then a long single file of camels, richly decorated and ornamented, some with bells dangling from their coloured saddle-cloths, some with ostrich feathers on their heads, or small flags studded with beads and shells, or palm branches, all bearing on their backs rich merchants, trading to El Hejaz. Accompanying them was another string of powerful young camels, heavily laden with the various kinds of merchandize, which these venturers intended to exchange in barter, for the products of Arabia. The motley host behind were the farriers, barbers, bakers, cooks, itinerant vendors of sherbet, cakes, and sweat-meats, the servants, in short, all the necessary or at least *customary* followers of the great pilgrimage, massed like the rabble rout, which, hangs on the skirts of an Indian army.

“In deference to the express commands of his Highness the then Viceroy, Abbas Pacha, the whole ceremony of the departure of the pilgrims had for some time past been made to correspond with that which had been observed in olden time. In consequence of this restored observance, the procession had been swelled by a large number of apes.

“These animals had been brought some time previously, from Mount Karah, or the highlands of Arafat and Taif. They are generally caught by means of a mixture composed of the juice of the *As-clepias*, dates, and some species of narcotic, by which they are attracted and stupified. The natives of Mekkah have a singular legend concerning these apes. They believe them to be *Yahóodee* (Jews), whom Allah has thus transformed as a punishment for breaking the Sabbath. These apes are hideous creatures of a greenish brown colour, with pinkish nether back, of the tint of a clean fat white pig, their arms are inordinately long, their eyes small, swinish, closely placed together, and almost concealed by an enormous snout. They are far from being so malicious as are many of their race, and, although particularly fond of *hashish*, *neebh*, *raki*, and all such intoxicating mixtures, are generally tractable enough. A thriving trade is carried on in catching, training, and then selling them on the banks of the Nile. The Bedouins prize them highly as adroit trappers of lutes.

“One of these apes, a formidable specimen of his kind, was seated, in obedience to the revival of ancient custom, on an enormous, plump, grey donkey, holding the bridle with perfect gravity, on the broad shoulders of the same noble type of patience lolled another more diminutive ape, whilst a still smaller one was perched between his ears. In the train of this rimian group came a most crafty-looking old ape, mounted on a huge dog, whose size made him a good substitute for a pony. The *kelb* bore the bit in his mouth with every appearance of the most good-humoured complacency;

whilst his strange grotesque-looking rider assumed an air of such intense thoughtfulness, that even the usually impassive Moslems applauded as he rode along.

“Preceded by detachments of cavalry and infantry, with an accompanying brass band, came now his Excellency, the Sandjiak, deputed by his Highness, the Viceroy, Abbas Pacha, to convey the new *kismah* to its destination, and bring back the remaining shreds of the old one, for distribution among the inmates of the harems of Egyptian princes and grandees. His Excellency was comfortably seated in a handsomely decorated *takhtrawan* (litter), constructed with a species of arched roof, most elaborately gilded. On every side of this litter were movable glass windows, furnished with purple silk curtains, which when drawn down, excluded the rays of the sun, at the same time that they admitted a free circulation of air. This spacious vehicle was firmly screwed on two long poles fixed into leathern sockets, which, in their turn, were attached to the ends of straps fastened to the pack saddles of two camels. The litter was thus borne by those noble beasts of burden, one of which was placed at each end of the shafts. Both animals were richly caparisoned in scarlet cloths, trimmed with a deep fringe, and their noses, heads, and humps adorned by white and red (dyed) ostrich feathers, similar in shape to the plumes with which I have seen the *Nassára* decorate their funeral cars. On the pack saddle of the animal in the rear was hooked the small ladder with which his Excellency was enabled to alight from his lofty wooden box. In front of the litter walked a stately Arab,



smoking his pipe, and holding in one hand a leading rope, fastened round the nose of the camel; whilst in the rear marched another Arab holding the animal in his charge by the tail.

“Behind the litter of his Excellency followed a whole crowd of dervishes. Some carried green silk flags bearing the inscription of ‘*Allah Mohammed!*’ some were beating *bazes* (kettledrums), with straps made of the hide of the hippopotamus; some again were clashing cymbals and bowing their heads repeatedly to the ground as they shouted ‘*Allah-il-Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah!*’ Those of the Befâ-eyeh order held black flags in one hand, whilst the other was perpetually employed in beating their *bazes*; the Kadir-eyetts carried tall palm sticks, or long poles, on which were suspended fishing-nets, decorated with rows of small fish from the Nile. In this train were men also, bearing the *mesh'als*, or staffs surmounted with cylindrical iron frames filled with wood, which was destined to be lighted at night during the pilgrimage, but now during the day covered with kerchiefs of red, yellow, pink, and green—the colours of the Prophet. Intermingled with them were several *ba-sharai* (lute) dervishes, many of whom were Moslems masquerading in that character, with the intention of dropping it at will. Following the dervishes were a host of drummers mounted on camels, beating their kettledrums. And now came, on foot, the thousands of hadjis, many of whom were attired in *haiks* (white woollen robes), and carried in their hands their *ikrams* (veils), with which they cover their heads when at their devotions before

the *kaabah* at Mekkah, or when kissing the black stone—a practice observed also, as I have heard,” continued Yusuf, turning to the Cocona, “by some of the Frangis in your far-famed Emerald Isle.” Who bowed her head, with the impression that this was some vague allusion to the well-known “*Blarney stone*.”

“This legion of human beings,” pursued the Mohaddetyn, “was comprised of natives of Algiers, Morocco, Tripoli, Tunis, and other far places and countries. Among them were bands of *Moghrabis* (Mogrebins), of ferocious aspect, easily distinguishable from the other pilgrims by their extraordinary height. They were attired in white *burnooses* (cloaks), with ample hoods; their hair was thick and curly, and they walked bareheaded. The manners of these men are generally brutal and quarrelsome. Now they looked around them, with an air of sovereign contempt for those of all other races impressed on their forbidding countenances. The Arab pilgrims, however, entertain on their own side an intense disgust for these men, whom they regard as utter barbarians, on account of their stolid ignorance and savage ferocity. The women who accompanied them were almost as gigantic in stature as the men, and were hideous figures in their masses of filthy rags.

“Almost all the pedestrian pilgrims were thin, miserable objects. The garments of the majority hung in tatters about them; many had no other covering than the cloth which girded their loins. Some of the most devout—the *extreme* fanatics of the party—had be-daubed and plastered their half-naked bodies all over

with the sacred slime of the Nile. Thus also do the Indian Fakirs cover themselves with the mud of their holy Ganges if they be within reach of that venerated river, or, if that fail, with wood ashes. The stench from these unwashed mendicants was so offensive as almost to be overpowering to the by-standers.

“Among the more distinguished of this seething, motley herd were several old Turks, ragged in their habiliments, and evidently in a state of indigence, but still wearing their characteristic air of grave majesty, and bearing themselves with their peculiarly-dignified deportment. Intermingled with them also were numerous *Asem babas* (Persian gentlemen), with their long beards and their high, conical, black caps; the butt and scorn—as well as the unveiled Persian women who accompanied them—of all the Moslem. From these Persians the other hadjis invariably kept aloof; they are looked on by true believers as *rafaz* (heretics), and called *chutes*, because they do not believe as the other Osmanli, who are designated *sumas*, in the oracular predictions of the Prophet Mahomet. In this respect they are treated with the scorn due to Giaours, Unbelievers, and those ‘miscreants,’ the ‘dogs of Christians.’ Even now they were constantly assailed with cries from the crowd of ‘May you be shadowless!’ ‘May the plague dwell in your house!’ ‘May the birds of the air soil your beard!’ The Arabs who walked with them in the line of march, and who felt it an indignity to tolerate their company, would perpetually ding in their ears that severest malediction of the Moslems, ‘May your wife be childless!’ and even

the little dirty Arab boys who stood by would taunt them with '*Asemi baba!*' ('You fool of a Persian!'), hiss at them '*Haif! Haif!*' ('Shame! Shame!'), or yell '*Ibn el Sheitan!*' ('Son of the Devil!'), with all the force of their little lungs. Their position was a strange and sad one.

"Among all the throng of hadjis, the most remarkable being in my eyes was the dervish Aboulfeda. He was a member of the Sharai order, and had already twice made the holy pilgrimage to Mekkah. He had made a vow, however, to accomplish this great act of duty thrice, and he was now returning to El Hejaz on his third expedition. I had already seen this singular individual, as remarkable by his wild ferocious aspect as by his manners. Chance had one day thrown me in his way by the side of an ablutional *sibeel*, where he sat squatting on the ground. He was covered with rags of coarse camel's hair, soiled with the dust of the two pilgrimages he had already made. In colour these rags resembled the cloths in which our ancient mummies are found enveloped. A belt of palm-tree fibre rope encircled his waist; but yet a body, bronzed and burned to the colour of senna by the scorching sun and the malignant *khamseen* (hot southerly wind) of the fiery desert, was left exposed to view. His thin wiry legs, of a light brick-dust colour, were clotted above the ankle with a hard incrustation of ashy-looking dust, which, as I well knew, nothing would have induced him to remove. He was evidently a firm believer in the doctrine set forth by the Koran—'He who is soiled with dust in the paths of Allah has nothing to fear

from the fires of *djehannum* (hell).’ The leanness of his thin frame was conspicuously displayed by the strong muscles and athletic bones which stood out from the surface. His jet black hair was thickly matted, and stood erect; other tufts of hair dotted his dark brown cheeks. His age was about five-and-twenty years.

“As he lay there reclining in the shade behind the fountain, his staring eyes were fixed before him with a wild, and yet impressive, glare of ecstatic contemplation. He had evidently withdrawn himself from the society of man to indulge in the visions vouchsafed to him. Did he dream, as he lay pondering there, on some revelation made to him from above, that on his return from his last pilgrimage he should find repose beneath the umbrageous foliage of the *tuba* (holy tree) in the Harem Paradise of the Prophet? His appearance was savage in the extreme; his countenance so wildly haggard as to be scarcely earthly. Still there he lay, the living impersonification of an ascetic fanatic, in the shape of a Moslem penitent. So indelible was the impression made on me at this second sight of him, that from that moment I never could forget him. He haunted me in my thoughts and in my day dreams. From that time he was constantly the prominent figure in the pictures of my mind—now wending his way with the utmost coolness through untrodden tracks whilst the hurricane raged around, and prostrated to the earth the mightiest trees of the forests; the lightning flashed in vivid fire, and the thunder pealed as the trumpet of the angel of death;—now traversing desolate waste lands, scarcely keeping body and soul together with manna and honey;

going onward on his way unheeding the roaring of the tiger, the bellowing of the elephant and the bison, and the dismal screech of the hungry vulture, yet seeing the most savage of these animals shrink appalled before his weird, gaunt, fearful form.

“I, too, felt at his aspect the awe which all must feel; but I accosted him, placed in his bony hand a purse of paras, and offered him a bundle of cigars. He took the baksheesh with an utterly impassive air, and, with one glance at the donor, exclaimed, ‘*Divoletin isliat Allah-es-marladek! Allah mouleyeminin éiléyé agam!*’ (‘May you increase in prosperity! May God have you in his keeping! May God grant you a good omen!’)

“I made several inquiries of him; but I learned from him no more than that he had kissed the *black* stone, made the seven sacred evolutions, and drunk of the miraculous water of the *zem-zem-bir* (well), in El Hejaz, in order to wash away his transgressions, according to the belief of all good *Sons of the Faithful*. We parted thus; and never did I think to see his face again. It was my destiny, however, that he should cross my path, as I shall hereafter mention.”

Here the Mohaddetyn paused, and evidently looked as if he desired a short respite from his fatigues. A narghilé was immediately handed to him, and lighted by one of the little slaves. For a few minutes he puffed away in silence.

### CHAPTER III.

WHEN the Mohaddetyn had sufficiently enjoyed the everlasting chibouque,—the most superlative of all pleasures of the Moslem, the fleeting delight so indispensable to all true believers, that I verily believe that they would sit astride across a barrel of gunpowder and smoke, with the most imperturbable fatalism, if so minded. The pipe was removed from him by one of the little atoms of humanity, who served as attending sprites on his will.

“I will resume my description of the strange scene presented by the departure of the Hadjis,” recommenced the venerable Yusuf, after his brief interval of repose. “Not the least interesting portion of it was offered by the bystanders themselves. Among the dense crowd were hundreds of the friends and relations of the pilgrims. The men were all dressed in ‘*fantasia*’ attire. The women, however, offered the greater variety in their different forms of apparel. Some of them, natives of Tooweh and Matrobia, and as such renowned for their beauty, wore the *burko*—a veil consisting of a piece of white calico, in which two holes are cut for their eyes, which glance out black and clear, and afford sufficient scope for perfectly free vision, a privilege

which they are nothing loath to use." This latter observation was evidently addressed more especially to the Cocona. "Others, again, wore a peculiar strip of muslin or calico fastened to a broad band on their heads, so as to descend between the eyes and over the nose, and was held between their teeth. Some had adopted the broader flap of muslin, descending nearly to the knees, over the nose and chin, for the purpose, it might be supposed, of concealing the blue tattooed marks on the lower portions of the face, adopted as symbols of their creed. Not a few were covered, again, with the more striking black *yashmack* (veil). Most shuffled along, enveloped in the *toba* (long flowing silk robe), with their swollen feet encased in yellow *babooshes* (half boots or slippers), all trodden down at heel. Among this heterogeneous crowd might be picked out also many from the lower classes of Arabs, Fellahs, and Egyptians, attired in their indigo-dyed cotton robes, with their *burkos* ornamented by strings of gold, silver, or copper coins, according to their means, with the largest piece placed in the centre, and the other pieces arranged in diminishing sizes.

"You Frenk Khanoums," observed the travelled Yusuf parenthetically, suddenly turning once more to the Cocona, "are singular mortals. The changes you make in your costumes, and designated by you '*the fashions*,' are simply adaptations derived from the women of various countries, and made to suit your own peculiar tastes. Now, the very hats you yourself wear, Khanoum Effendem, are simply imitations of our *fezzes*, or skull-caps, decorated with feathers and ribbons instead of



tassels, and without our rich gold-thread embroidery. Your veils *alla Franca*, which descend to your chin, are only transparent yashmacks of a different shape; and even those I have seen in my travels to Paris and London fringed with small base-gilt coins, are much after the idea of our burkos."

"*Taib! Taib! Mashallah! Mashallah!*" acquiesced the Cocona.

"Many of these female bystanders, I am ashamed to own," pursued the Mohaddetyn, "might have been detected in the act of flirtation, even with the *Giaours* (unbelievers)."

At this revelation the ladies of the harem burst into a loud and merry laugh. A few looked prudish, and exclaimed, "*Puf! Haidè! Toù, o nè sakil chéy.*" ("Fie! fie! That was very shocking of them.")

"*Chubhé'cix.*" ("Undoubtedly.") "Most of them, I must say, too, were as great adepts in the skilful disposal and movement in the folding of their *habaraks* and *feredjes* (Arab and Turkish dominoes) as any of the *Khanoum Beled-Andaloos* (Spanish ladies) whom I had seen, in the arrangement of their mantillas, and were as apt scholars in the art of coquetting with their yashmacks as those flirts of western countries with their fans."

I may here digress, one moment, in my own person, to remark that fans are also not unknown to eastern ladies. They are used by the slaves in all the harems to cool the faces of their mistresses; but they are by no means similar in form to those in vogue in European countries. They are generally made in the shape

of a small flag, from six to eight inches wide, and about nine inches long, made of split palm leaves, of different shades, neatly plaited or woven together. The handles are palm sticks of about double the length of the flap-per. Men as well as women make use of them, not only to repel the heat, but to whisk away one of the scourges of El-Masr, the flies. They are mostly manufactured in El Hejaz, and sold at Mekkah for a few paras. The feather fan, used by fine ladies in the middle ages, and even to the beginning of last century, but here made of peacocks' and white ostrich plumes, is also to be seen in the possession of the princesses.

"These masquerading females, for so I must call them," continued the aged Yusuf, "would sometimes put aside their dominoes from their faces with all the slow pomp and conscious elegance of the gorgeous peacock, then with all the languor of a weak and enervated beauty, and now again with the sly fitful artfulness of the most practised coquettes, or even the cunning wiles of the *Baboulouki*. Your Highness would have smiled to see with what rapid dexterity they would envelop themselves, as closely as mummies, in their dominoes on the approach of any mother of the harem, negress slave, or one of my own fraternity, many of whom are more jealous of their charges than the masters themselves. At such moments a whirr, as of a bird rising on the wing, or a breeze suddenly sprung up, might be heard around. Many actually wore those unbecoming *alla Franca* masks. Some simulated age, as if bent on persuading the gazers that from beneath those artful folds would emerge some hideous, emaciated

claw, then tormented the shrinking observers by suddenly displaying an ill-disguised grace, which revealed, as if in spite of themselves, their youth, and finished by curving their backs, as if deformed, drooping their heads down on their busts, and shuffling away like crones in the last stage of decrepitude.

“To me the scene was as amusing as any simulated spectacle I had ever seen in Alla Franca playhouses. I am aware,” joined the listless Agaci by way of an apology, “that the more rigidly orthodox Moslems cannot reconcile it to their conscience to enter such places of resort as the Italian operas at Cairo and Alexandria, where they may see men mixing indiscriminately with unveiled females before the eyes of an assembly. But in travelling the strict observance of such rules may be pardoned. I may say, even, that the scene of all these feminine manœuvres I witnessed was even more entertaining to me than any Alla Franca acting show. It was one of actual out-door Egyptian life, in which I possessed the key to all the characters ; and I could but laugh in my sleeve as I saw the *Frenk somahin* (foreign traveller) now approaching the forms they took for Turkish houris ; now falling back as the same figures presented to them cruel realisations of hideous and decrepit hags.”

“It must be said,” interrupted the Cocona, “that the old women in these lands are marvels of ugliness. They never, indeed, attempt to make themselves ‘beautiful for ever ;’ not that cosmetics fail them for such a marvellous transformation of the human face, for of such there is abundance and to spare ; but because, as I

am told, they grow avaricious with age, and refuse to dispense their *paras* to pay the beautifiers."

"Some of the bolder of the females," pursued the Mohaddetyn, "would avail themselves of a slight breeze to lift for a few seconds a portion of their yashmacks and display to the enraptured gaze of their pursuers faces far more strikingly beautiful than any of the Giaour Khanoums who, from the balcony of Zech's hotel, at Cairo, were spectators of this hadji carnival. It may be confidently asserted, Khanoum Effendem, that it is only at such moments *sovahins* have ever looked with impunity on the faces of Turkish, Arab, or Egyptian beauties. But then, in the rapid fleeting of a lightning flash, the yashmack was drawn tight, the usual appearance of some unfolded mummy was again resumed, the coquettes waddled away with that gait so peculiar to Turkish women, which they had learned to imitate to perfection, and however closely pursued by the *kelb Nassáreen*, whose ears at such moments were everlastingly assailed by the shouts of the urchin-crew, '*Haramsadeh!*' ('Ill-born!') or '*Divané!*' ('Idiot!') they contrived to escape by mingling with the crowd. The Armenian women who ventured to masquerade in Turkish garb, to delude the ignorant and unwary, even went so far as to carry on open and undisguised flirtations. The moment, however that they found themselves in any proximity with the *camasses* they would envelop themselves again as rapidly as possible in their *habaraks*, well knowing that if discovered by their vigilant spies, and taken for *real* Moslem women in their disguise, they

would be immediately seized for interchanging words with the *Frenk*, and possibly be beaten to death. Many of these females are such wily adepts in the practices of deceit, and so adroit in the management of the folds of their envelopments, that they would contrive, as though only anxious to readjust their dress with due becomingness and decency, so to twitch them apart as to display their full busts and their small delicate hands, with tapering henna-tipped fingers, and then, as if shocked themselves at the accident, which had displayed their charms to vulgar eyes, hastily cover again the beauties they had disclosed. But even in the re-arrangement of their yashmacks they would still show their cunning skill. They would manoeuvre with them so as to render them more transparent, or more opaque, place them higher or lower on their faces, and thus increase or diminish the distance below their head-dress. But even with the closest covering: they would manage that between the lines of white should be seen to sparkle, like brilliants of the finest water, many a pair of beautiful jet-black orbs, the lids of which were tinged with *khol*.

“Since I am speaking of *khol*, I may as well inform you, Khanoum Effendem, that this pigment was used for darkening the eyelids, even by the ancient Egyptians. It is made by the Arabs in this fashion. They scoop out the inside of a lemon, fill the rind with plumbago and burnt copper, and place the fruit on a hot stove until it becomes carbonised. Then they pound it in a mortar along with coral, sandal wood, pearls, and ambergris, together with the wing of a bat,

and a portion of the body of a chameleon, all these ingredients having been previously burned to a cinder, and, whilst still hot, moistened with rose water.

“I may add also, in reference to the use of the eye by enveloped females; that, in no part of the known world, is the value of its expression held in such estimation as in the East. This most mysterious organ is considered to give the *real* character to the whole face. Glance but at the eyes of any of that vast disguised population which wanders about in Turkey and Egypt. Under the garb of the wanderer we may detect at once, by them, the vagrant philosopher, the merchant, the brigand, or the *thug*. If the eye be closed, says some *Frenk* author, the face is void of all expression; when it is opened it beams a meaning over the whole countenance. This is the case, too, with all considerable animals. Whilst their eyes are shut their nature remains unknown to us; when opened they are made to present human beings to us as they are. This mysterious expression of the eye depends on something more than organisation. Nowhere is this evidenced more than in the East, where the cloaked and veiled population is, if I may so speak, ‘*all eyes*.’ Let the structure and colour of the organ be identically the same in two several individuals; yet the expression is far different. The eye would seem to express the intellectual character, whilst the mouth and lips denote the feelings and the appetites. Even a handsome face, without expressive eyes, can only fail to attract; you would pass it as that of a mere puppet. No eyes, like those of the veiled Moslems, can flash so markedly in anger, or so

markedly melt in love. It is only when the form grows too obese that the orbs become dull and heavy, with a dead fish-like look. The eyes of the Egyptians, which appear to have descended from generation to generation, are strikingly peculiar. They are long, almond-shaped, deeply fringed, and slightly raised at the outer corner, as though fatigued by the light and heat of the sun. The science of the eye is well known to these Armenian women of whom I have been speaking, and this science is ably used by these cunning adepts in all species of intrigue, when they attempt to pass for Turkish females. They have one distinctive mark, however, by which they may be ordinarily known, and which marks a difference with the Turkish woman. They seldom, if ever, wear the yellow babooshes so characteristic of the latter. Yet, they have been known to imitate so admirably the manners and allurements of the nationality they affect, that many a Turkish libertine has been deceived by them when roaming in search of an adventure."

"*Taib! Taib! Mashallah! Mashallah!*" ("Bravo!"), interrupted the Cocona. "I am thoroughly convinced, from my own individual knowledge of actual Turkish and Egyptian life, that Europeans who have fancied themselves beloved by Turkish or Egyptian women, and have actually flattered themselves with the belief that they have made a conquest of some favourite slave of a great Pacha, or, perhaps, even of the 'Light of the Padishah's Harem,' have merely been the dupes of crafty, designing Armenian coquettes."

By thus speaking, I found I had afforded our amateur

Mohaddetyyn another opportunity of snatching a few more puffs from his favourite narghilé, which a little slave, whose duty it was, as chibouquedji, had kept alight during his narrative. This relief, I could but feel, was due to the pleasant old man; and so I continued my reflections, in order to afford him a longer interval of enjoyment. The substance of my observations I will now give to my reader, more in detail than then given to my Eastern listeners.

From my personal experience of the interior life of the houris in the East, as already described by me in "Harem Life in Egypt and Constantinople," I do not hesitate to declare that the odalick is as hermetically sealed to all the male sex as has been constantly asserted. The *baba* (father), and the *gardash* (brother), are the only men who are ever permitted to see their *ana* (mother), *kez* (daughter), or *kez-karendach* (sister), unveiled.

In the harem no other males ever enter, except an occasional artisan for some matter of necessary repair. In such a case, he has a kerchief bound over his eyes as if about to play a game of "Blind Man's Buff." A cry of "*Dustoor!*" ("Take care! Out of the way!") is shouted at the entrance, and resounds throughout the whole building. At this sound, the women rush, like maniacs, into their rooms; the doors are fastened by eunuchs, and sentinels are placed over them. From behind their closely-trellised windows, the odalisques, it is true, may obtain a fleeting sight, not only of the masked and densely-covered female population of such cities as Cairo, Alexandria, or Constantinople, but even



of such male beings as may pass within their range of view. But that is all. I have frequently been an eye-witness of the curiosity and delight of these women, when looking forth into the outer world, and seeing pachas, ministers, officers, soldiers, gardeners, and labourers pass to and fro, in and out of the harem, or about the pavilion grounds. Somehow or other, too, they contrive to obtain considerable information respecting these objects of their curiosity. Sometimes I have inquired of them the names of grandees who have passed before us; and not only have they told me their names and the posts they held, but even whole histories of their antecedents, the names of their wives, and their relationship, if any, to his Highness the Viceroy and the Viceregal family. From the slaves, also, I was always able to obtain any information I might require, and, strange to say, I have always found that information to be perfectly correct. Out of curiosity I have tested their accuracy by applying to another channel, which, I well knew, could not err. This was no less a personage than the Viceroy's European favourite, or "one of his partners," as he was peculiarly called by the inmates of the harem.

The slaves in the Viceregal Odalisk are, generally speaking, a very merry set of beings. Often, when I was seated in the Grand Pacha's Hall of Audience, would they run in, in order to look out of my open windows. If they caught a glimpse of any *ragâl* (man) they would make the strangest grimaces, run away like frolicsome children, and then hurry back again. Never, however, did they *dare* to utter a word. Had

such an indiscretion been detected a host of "Spectres" would have entered, and dragged them away; and several blows from the formidable *courbach* would have been the inevitable consequence, even had they escaped the greater punishment of being banished to some distant harem on the banks of the Upper Nile.

I have often missed slaves for weeks together, and found their places filled by strange *oustas*, who had come down from some one of the distant enchanted castles. Still there have been occasions when even the fear of this punishment, if indeed they considered their rustication in the interior of the country for a period a real punishment, would not have deterred these women from calling out to some of the workmen had I not interfered. In some cases I would threaten with my forefinger so majestically, that the culprit would draw back in terror, to my great amusement. If, however, I found any delinquent more refractory than the others, I would seat myself at my writing-desk, and pretend to indite a *mektóob* (letter) to his Highness the Viceroy. That was all sufficient. The hem of my robe would be kissed, submission made to my will, and all be peace again.

In truth, I had no desire to be cloistered again behind the old latticed windows. This would inevitably have been the case had I permitted such indecorous conduct to take place in my presence. The "*Guardian of the Girls*" would indubitably have caused the obstructing *mushrebeehs* to be replaced, and vain would have been all my entreaties to have them again removed, unless, indeed, I had made a *direct* appeal to his Highness the Viceroy.

Sometimes little licences, which it was impossible for me to repress, would indeed take place. I have seen some refractory little gipsy of a slave clap her hands violently at the window, to attract the attention of a passing workman, and then, before he could look round, hurry away to some other aperture, and laugh in her sleeve with delight at having played a trick upon the bewildered *dthukker* (male). Some of the *oustas*, too, have ventured in my presence to utter shrill falsetto whinings, and have the fun of watching the stupid artisan as he stood riveted to the spot gazing at the vacated window, fancying, perhaps, that he was enjoying the songs of *Corkam* (Paradise), and ignorant that his female lurers stood ensconced behind the window, peeping through the hangings, and roaring with laughter till their fat sides shook. Never, however, did any of these casual male passers attempt to climb to the window. They well knew that if detected in such an act of audacity a hundred scimitars would have flashed from the scabbards of the sexless guardians of that "*Abode of Bliss*," and that their bodies would have been quickly hewn into mincemeat.

"I have seen these gentry go through their scimitar practice," I said, during the observations I was making on this topic, "and the dexterity with which they cut through a cotton pillow, as a substitute for a human trunk, made my blood curdle in my veins. One adroit blow of the sharp weapon, and the pillow was cut in twain. To me it seemed as if the mowing of human heads must have been a matter of daily practice to them, and that, were that really not the case, they

had, at all events, the finest talent possible to become admirable executioners."

"*Fena, fena! Khanoum Effendem*" ("Naughty, naughty! lady"), exclaimed a whole chorus of voices from the spot where the ladies of the harem were squatted; and one of them, who spoke Italian well, added, in that language, "Take care, Cocona! you must not tell tales out of school."

"*Bounda chachaugak bir chéy yoh*" ("There is nothing astonishing in that"), remarked the Kislár Agaci very coolly.

By this time he seemed to have been sufficiently refreshed. He declared himself ready to continue his reminiscences as Mohaddetyñ.

"I will now relate to your Highness," he recommenced, "something interesting on the topic to which the Cocona has alluded. It may give you some idea of the audacious pranks which *Frenk* noble gentlemen will attempt to play when visiting Eastern climes in the vessels they call 'yachts.'

"It is now two years since I accompanied her Highness Princess Fatimah Khanoum to Constantinople, where she went to pass Ramadan at the Ottoman court. I was one day smoking my chibouque in the Audience Hall of the Imperial Kislár Agaci, when the booming of a salute, fired from the two formidable fortresses which defend the *Chanak Kalepi* (the Strait of the Dardanelles), announced the departure of a *Frenk* steamer of war, accompanied by a steam yacht.

"Hassan Ali, the Sultan's grand eunuch,—a very ugly specimen of his race,—sat opposite to me, smooth-

ing his beardless black face with his long hands: on the little finger of his right hand he wore a diamond ring—a *gem of gems*, valued at upwards of five million of piastres. By his side was squatted the *Capou Agaci* (the chief of the white eunuchs), who took precedence of his comrade. This latter was one of the most ungainly looking of my fraternity I had ever beheld. His parchment-coloured face was heavy and bloated; his large staring eyes looked like two black balls fixed into a white target, and seemed incapable of receiving any reflection; his thick overhanging lip gave him the air of a *guardian* of the most cross-grained and crooked species; although in truth, as I learned, he was full of kindness to the race of women placed beneath his charge. Both these important individuals, as may be easily surmised, were not only immensely rich, but possessed unlimited sway over the almost countless mass of houris, on whose countenances no male Moslem, or dog of a Christian, had ever gazed; they had the sovereign mastery to mould the minds of all these women, as well as of the legions of *oustas* who attended to their wants, for good or for evil, according to their own will and pleasure. The power they thus possessed for carrying out any political or social intrigues can scarcely be too highly rated, especially when it be borne in mind that their sway was at the same time unlimited over that multitude of which an Oriental proverb says, ‘Fifteen hundred mouths daily eat the bread of the Deity of Islam.’

“On hearing the last gun fired, the *Capou Agassi* turned to his *arkadash*, exclaiming, ‘*Allah hereem*,

*hemén kalkâyor, Allah sé lamét versin Avropu.* ('God be praised, they are off! I wish them a safe journey to Europe.') '*Hipsi bridir! Hipsi bridir! Amin! Amin!*' ('So be it! So be it! Amen! Amen!'), responded Hassan Ali, at the same time clapping his hands and shouting, '*Ja Wallád! Hôt cahveh.*' ('Hola, boy! Bring coffee.') After we had partaken of this refreshment, he added, 'As you have been residing at Kadi-Keui, Yusef, you may not have heard the story of the clever manner in which my *kaymakam* (lieutenant) has just outwitted two *Frenk* grandees. If you can spare the time, and pass your evening with us, I will relate to you the strange adventure.'

"*Pek éyi*' ('Most willingly'), I replied.

"Well, then, but a few evenings since,' continued Hassan Ali, 'a beautiful *Frenk* yacht—a perfect *péri* of the waters—anchored near the bridge which occupies the centre of the transparent waters of the Golden Horn. The owners, the *Frenk* grandees of whom I made mention, came on shore to visit all the *mourahhas* (ambassadors) and *bachi konsolos* (consuls general) of the various European powers. *Fêtes* were given them by these illustrious personages; and, in return, they sumptuously entertained their entertainers on board their elegant vessel. Daily, too, might they be seen exploring every nook and corner of the waters, accompanied by the well-known Barbab Ali. This man, popularly called "*The Caikdji of the Bosphorus*," is one of the notables of the capital. He is a handsome, well-made, robust Armatolian, and forms a picture which attracts every eye as he passes, with

his bronzed, shaven visage, darkened by a thick moustache; his bare brown legs and arms; his broad and powerful chest, exposed to view beneath the opening of his ribbed shirt; his brawny arms, over which his sleeves are tucked up, to leave full liberty for his skill at the oar; his keen dark eye and his fine intellectual head, so picturesquely set off by his red fez, with its indigo-blue tassel of at least a foot in length. To complete the picture, he is scrupulously clean, performing, as I have heard, all the ablutions inculcated by his religion with the zeal of the most ardent devotee: his wide trousers of linen are as white as the driven snow, and are set off by a broad woollen sash of green and yellow. He may be looked on, in fact, as the finest specimen of that superb race of men to which he belongs, the Caikdjis of Stamboul, of whose manners and customs our worthy old Admiral Muchaver Pacha (Sir Adolphus Slade) has written so much interesting information in his book.

“About the latter end of last week I was called away to attend his Majesty the Grand Seignior at his summer kiosk at Ismid. On this occasion we were accompanied by nearly the *entire* harem, consisting of upwards of twelve hundred women, including the *oustas*. A few old and utterly withered odalisques were alone left behind; and of these worn-out specimens of female nature my kaymakam, Kaleb, was left in charge. As it afterwards came to my knowledge, and as you shall hear in the sequel of my story, this man, along with the Caikdji of the Bosphorus, his intimate friend, availed himself of our absence to laugh in the Chris-

tians' beards, whilst they pocketed a great amount of baksheesh. May their shadows never grow less!

“The day after my departure, Kaleb met the Caikdji Bachi at the “Scale” of *Top-Hané* (Cannon-place) just as he was embarking in his caïk, after having performed his devotions in the mosque of Melan Mahmoud. “*Salam Aleikum, khosh bulduk, Guitiné liyum. Guemir bizi almadan kalkmácen*” (“Well met! How do you do? I must be gone, or the vessel will be off without us”), said the Caikdji, pointing to the yacht. “*Aleikum salam Daha téz-yuruyélim Makinanen gurutucunu-ichidiyorme senex*” (“How are you? Let us go quickly. Do you hear the noise of the engine?”), replied Kaleb, as he ordered his own caikdjis to pull as rapidly as possible. It was his design, for his own purposes, to accompany Barbab Ali on board the Christian yacht—so off started the two schemers in quest of an adventure, of which some faint idea had already crossed them. On reaching the yacht, Kaleb was received with every mark of respect. Pipes and coffee were served on the deck, over which was placed a thick awning, which rendered that portion of the vessel cool and agreeable. The crew were neatly attired in blue shirts, faced with white, white trousers, and straw hats, with bands of broad black ribbon, on which were imprinted in gilt letters the words, “*The Iron Duke*”—the name of the vessel. The strictest discipline prevailed on board: the whole craft was the pattern of order and cleanliness. All these details, as you may imagine, I afterwards received from Kaleb.

“Among the personages present on the occasion of



Kaleb's arrival chanced to be his Excellency, Muchaver Pacha, *Kapoudan Pacha vékili* (Admiral), who, being himself an Englishman by birth, completely initiated his fellow-countrymen into all the minute observances of Oriental etiquette. Havannah cigars were smoked; glass after glass of *Eau de Dantzic* was quaffed. At last the conversation turned on the extraordinary arts by which *Frenks* of various nations had contrived to laugh at the beard of the Moslems by masquerading it at El Medinah and Mekkah in orthodox Mussalman costume. The two English effendem, whose names, if I rightly remember the strange sounds, were the Duke of Oporto and Sir Robert Cotton, had the reputation of delighting in daring adventures and carrying them out at any risks. They were renowned for making advances of love to *yeni gnélin* (young ladies), some of whom had *kogas* (husbands) and others *nichaules* (lovers), whose faces were known to the world, and on whose figures the public had gazed. But now they absolutely had the audacity coolly to ask Kaleb to afford them an opportunity of visiting the enchanted castle of "*The Light of the World*" during that Prince's absence. To be sure, they were well-bred enough to apologise to him for the gross breach of Oriental etiquette of which they were thus guilty, craving his indulgence at the same time from the fact of their being *Frenks*, and appealing to his good sense and discretion to excuse their curiosity. They informed the eagerly-listening schemer that they were perfectly aware no hated Giaour's feet had ever profaned that inaccessible retreat of the "Baba of Islam." Of course,

in thus speaking they alluded only to male infidels; for it is well known to all of us that the "Deity of Islam" has frequently shed the light of his countenance on various beauties of the West, and in some cases lavished *paras* on them in return for the sunshine of their smiles. They declared also they well knew that, in accordance with the literal meaning of the word *harem* (sacred), the "*Mansion of Bliss of the Padishah*" was considered too holy to be polluted even by the footsteps of any other Moslemah, and much less by the soles of the feet of infidels and dogs of Christians, even when the lovely péris of the Ali Giaours Kalef had fled from that earthly paradise. But yet they admitted that it was not the desire to admire the far-famed luxury of that superb Odalick, which had excited their curiosity, but the longing to feast their infidel eyes on the beauty of the odalisques, of whose unsurpassable charms their own poets had sung such wondrous songs of praise. They even confessed that the chief object of their visit to Istamboul was to undertake this exploit, more daring than the ascent of the highest mountain in the universe, or the braving of a thousand hurricanes, and that they should be grieved to the heart if condemned to return to their own country without having accomplished a feat on which their audacious souls were fixed.

"It was the knowledge of the fact that Kaleb was an Abyssinian by birth, and had himself been once "*a dog of a Christian*," which had encouraged these *Frenk* adventure-seekers in throwing aside the mantle of reserve and laying bare their designs to him. They speedily

began to speak with him on the subject of the Odaliques, and the possibility of obtaining admission to their presence openly and undisguisedly. Such a discourse would be considered by all strict Moslemah as an insult, you are aware; and, indeed, the mention of the female members of his family is looked upon by the indignant Osmanlee as the greatest breach of Oriental etiquette. The *Frenk* grandees were, doubtless, well aware how strictly interdicted it is to make the slightest allusion, even indirectly, to this forbidden topic; they had been known, when addressing any Moslem, whether of high or low degree, to have carefully abstained from such improper conversation. But now they persisted in their endeavours.

“To all the inquiries of the audacious men Kaleb made the temena, and replied, “*Bouna mukéddér boumumkir déguïlder efféndim*” (“I am sorry, noble sirs, but it is out of the question”), until at length the subject was allowed to drop. At that interview nothing more was said, and Kaleb took his departure, accompanied by the Caikdji Bachi.

“The two friends glided along the transparent waters of the Bosphorus side by side in their respective caïks. They had lighted their cheroots, of which a lavish supply had been given them by the *Frenk* grandees, and they remained thus for a while in silence, each absorbed in his own thoughts, and even regardless of the wondrous sight around them. It was the night of the grand illumination, and the Bosphorus seemed transformed into a fairy lake.’

“Yet it was a sight worth looking on,” pursued

Yusuf, suddenly dropping the thread of Hassan Ali's narrative, in order to offer his own incidental remarks. "The panorama of the Bosphorus on this occasion is one of surpassing beauty. There repose the rich waters so called, Khanoum Effendem, because they teem with fish, not the least attractive of which are the shoals of dolphins, looking like forms of gold as they disport themselves in the bright rays of the mid-day sun. These fish, however, you must know, are forbidden to be caught by the inhabitants of Constantinople: it is feared, as the report goes, that they might have been nurtured on the bodies of the Janissaries, who were cast into the depths, or of other mysterious victims. Around and about are the verdant hills on which the moonbeams dance like spirits of light. The ships with which the surface is crowded are all covered with one blaze of fire, from the water's edge to the top of the highest mast, looking like constellations of brilliant stars dropped from the heavens—here hovering in the air, there plunged in the reflection beneath the burning flood.

"Before reaching the *scale* where they were to land, however, the Caikdji, suddenly breaking silence, confided to his friend Kaleb, that if he would contrive by any possible means to obtain for these daring Giaours a peep at the gilded puppet-show they ambitioned to see, no less a sum than five hundred thousand piastres would be the baksheesh given for his compliance. He himself, he continued, would undertake to conduct these adventurers in his own caik to the landing-place nearest the seraglio. No doubt the eyes of Kaleb glistened at the prospect of pocketing

half a million of piastres. It was, I must confess, a very *strong* temptation. Still the penalty which he would have to pay, were his breach of trust discovered, naturally caused him still to hesitate. Such a dereliction of his duty was impossible, he thought. Besides, how was it to be brought about? Yet even with those hesitations before him, Kaleb could not help debating within himself how the difficulties, which lay between him and the promised reward, were to be overcome, and the more he reflected, the stronger became the temptation, and with the temptation, the cunning of the plan. The seraglio, he well knew, did not at that time contain a single *dilciz* (mute). He did not need to entertain any fear of seeing the tapestry of a door suddenly lifted, and the apparition of a dreaded form in white silk robes enriched by a gold belt, with its head surmounted by a white silk cap, curiously topped by four curves, standing before him on the threshold, the fatal silken cord in hand, ready to inflict punishment for crime. He was aware, however, at the same time, that his own *arkadash* were nearly as expert in the art of strangulation as the more dreaded mutes, and that its acquisition had formed a notable portion of their education. Consequently it might even fall to their lot to exercise their ability on himself.' ”

“*Taib! Taib! Inshallah! Inshallah!*” here interrupted the Cocona. “More than once I have heard the eunuchs at Constantinople vaunting to each other, with the greatest coolness, their adroitness in that horrible practice; but, *Allah kereem*, I never was eyewitness of the murderous act.”

“So it is to be hoped!” exclaimed the Mohaddety. “But to resume the narrative of Hassan Ali:—‘Kaleb smoked his cheroot in silence, whilst these reflections crossed his mind. Still, with the knowledge that were he to consent to the proposal of the English grandees, his life would not be worth one hour’s purchase, he could not help turning over in his brain schemes by which he might clutch the *paras* of the *Frenks*, and then laugh in their beards, without committing any real indiscretion, or bringing himself within the pale of the Moslem law. His deep reverie continued up to the time when the two caïks came abreast at the landing-place of the old seraglio.’”

“Strange it is,” remarked the Cocona, parenthetically, “that the singular inclined plane, which was always a notable feature of that landing-place, should still be left overhanging the sea, although the old seraglio was long since destroyed by that disastrous fire in which hundreds of odalisques, poor wretched creatures, were burned to ashes.”

“*Taib! Taib!*” responded Yusuf, and once more took up the broken thread of the Grand Eunuch’s story. “On their arrival at the *shoot* (the name commonly given to the plane), Kaleb at last broke silence.

““*Bakatum! Bou-ola-bilir*” (“We shall see! It can be done”), he muttered.

“The caïkdji of the Bosphorus, who had been resting on his oars, with his large black eyes anxiously fixed on his companion’s countenance, clapped his hands in high glee on hearing these words. He was in a state of

ecstasy already at the prospect, which they implied, that he might really, after all, pocket his share of the baksheesh promised by the English adventure-seekers, in case it should lead to the accomplishment of their object.

““Hush! hush!” interposed Kaleb. “By the beard of the Prophet, whatever is done must pass in the darkness of mystery. *Janum! Janum!* were we to be detected in hatching our plot the *dilciz* might make short work of its execution by twisting, not his silken cord, for we are no *sadraxams* (grand viziers), but his tough hempen one around our throats. Now as regards these two Englishmen, nothing is easier than to introduce them into the selamlick of the Old Seraglio; it is the *odalick* alone which constitutes the difficulty and danger. But *bosh!* (“it is nothing!”), I will make that my business! You, Barbab Ali, return to the yacht, inform the *Frenk* grandees that you have persuaded me to meet their views. But the *paras*, Caïkdji Bachi, the *paras* must be forthcoming at once; without the *paras* I cannot consent to prosecute the affair. Let them know that my *arkadash* must be propitiated—for these fellows, should they have an inkling of the affair, would indubitably inform against us—but, when propitiated by baksheesh, they can be made to be as deep in the slough as ourselves; for, as our proverb has it, ‘He who eats the fish sins the same as he who kills it.’”

““*Tabii chéy dir!*” (“That is quite correct!”), said the Caïkdji Bachi, smiling knowingly. “But now tell me,” he added, “on what spot am I to await their return?”

They intend leaving the Bosphorus immediately on the accomplishment of their purpose."

"Both the caïks had remained motionless; the Bosphorus was then as calm as an unruffled lake. "There," said Kaleb, with a somewhat sinister and significant air, pointing to the "*shoot*," "that is the one means of exit I shall have at my command."

"Barbab Ali shuddered, as he turned and looked at the ominous plane, for well he knew what species of passengers were wont to be shot down it, like grain into a lighter. He shook his head doubtfully.

"Kaleb smiled, and answering the Caïkdji's thought, said "*Malesh! Malesh! Hic kôrkma! Bakalum! Sizé seuz viré bilirim kâ kork agak birchey degnil dir.*) ("Never mind! Never mind! Fear nothing! We shall see! I promise you that nothing serious shall happen.")

"Upon this the two worthy schemers parted—Kaleb on his way back to the old Seraglio, and the Caïkdji Bachi to the English yacht.

"As soon as my kaymakam had entered the Grand Eunuch's Hall in the Seraglio, he squatted himself on the divan, clapped his hands, and commanded Sardek, his favourite little slave, who responded to the summons, to order all his *arkadash* to assemble there immediately, and to bring pipes and coffee. The commands were obeyed, and before very long the hall became a perfect council chamber. When all the eunuchs were seated around, sipping their findjans of Mocha, and emitting volumes of smoke from their chibouques, filled with fragrant latakia, Kaleb related to them in strict confidence, the substance of his conversation with the Caïkdji Bachi,



and detailed to them, under the seal of profound secrecy, the measures he proposed to take to gratify the curiosity of the *Frenk* Effendims, without seriously compromising himself or them. They themselves were to be called upon to act their respective parts in the scene which he desired to have played in the Imperial Selamlick; and, in order to ensure their co-operation, he promised the distribution of several purses of paras among them. The conference lasted long, but at last the unanimous consent of the assembly of eunuchs was obtained. Kaleb was then proceeding to explain to each personage, in detail, the part which he was required to fill, to the best of his abilities, when little Sardek suddenly appeared to usher into the kaymakam's presence the Caïkdji of the Bosphorus. On his entrance the eunuchs rose, salamed, and retired.

““*Koshgelden! Janum! Janum! Aferino Otour!*” (“Well done! Be seated!”), exclaimed Kaleb, eager to learn the news from the yacht, as he motioned to Barbab Ali to occupy the post of honour on his right hand, on the divan.

“““I rowed rather smartly back,” said the Caïkdji, “and fortunately it was that I did so, for I found my *Frenk* grandees about to depart with his Excellency Mahomsidd Bey, *Kapoudan Pacha* (Lord High Admiral of the Turkish Fleet), who was on board, and smoking with them on the deck, to visit the arsenal of Top Hané. On seeing me, however, they craved permission of his Excellency to retire, for a few moments, to the saloon. Then I communicated to them the intelligence that you had been won over to

consent to their petition. A *séné* (an order) on their bankers was my answer to this intelligence. Quick as the whirlwind I sped away with my prize. On its presentation at the bankers it was immediately converted into *paras*, all in *medjidies* (Turkish gold coin of the value of twenty-three francs), and here they are!" Thus saying Barbab Ali drew forth several purses from the pockets of his widely spreading inexpressibles, and deposited them at the foot of the divan.

"*"Taib! Taib! Mashallah! Mashallah!"* ("May your shadow never grow less! May Allah never re-  
frigerate your countenance!"), exclaimed the delighted Kaleb. Then turning to little Sardek, who was gathering up the purses with alacrity, he added "*Ja Wallúd!*" ("Holla, boy!"), "hand one of those to my worthy friend, Barbab Ali."

"The Caikdji Bachi clutched the proffered twenty *medjidies*, with a profound salaam, and restored them eagerly to his pocket, then, after another sip at his findjan of coffee, made his temena, and retired, not, however, without a previous caution from the astute kaymakam not to entrust the precious secret to any other mortal ear, and a strict injunction to keep his appointment punctually on the following Saturday.

"As soon as the Caikdji Bachi had taken his departure, the other eunuchs were again summoned. Kaleb now explained to them, that they were required to borrow forthwith, from any of those withered old odalisques, who had been left behind in the harem, or their slaves, all the most magnificent dresses, shawls, and kerchiefs, all the most costly jewels, all the prettiest embroidered

slippers, all the gaudiest artificial flowers, and all the choicest cosmetics. He cautioned them at the same time to give the ancient ladies to understand that the eunuchs of the Seraglio had invited a large party of *arkadash* from the palaces of the sisters and nephews of his Highness the Sultan, beyond Kouron-Tehesme, for the following Saturday evening, and that they intended to get up a splendid *fantasia* among themselves. In fact it was understood and arranged that the whole party of the improvised secret privy councillors should transform themselves into impersonifications of the Peris of the Enchanted Castle of the Deity of the Harem Paradise of Mahomet, the very smallest atoms of humanity in the corps even being put in requisition to masquerade in female *fantasia* attire on the forthcoming occasion. Haste was necessary, however, as the *first* rehearsal of the intended masquerade was to take place that very evening. Oh, my kaymakam is a clever fellow," added Hassan Ali, "and might even prove an excellent conductor of the representations of the drolleries of Karagheuz.

" 'You ought to know,' continued the Grand Eunuch, 'that my lieutenant is far from being a miser. On the contrary, to his generosity of spirit might be applied the words of the poet—

" When once his sea of gifts began to swell,  
The sun was but a pearl, the sky its shell."

In fact, he directed his little purse-bearer to hand over to each of the eunuchs a purse of twenty *medjdies*, and to distribute five other purses, as *baksheesh*, among the odalisques.

“As soon as the party had received their instructions, and smoked the cheroots, which Kaleb had distributed among them from the liberal store bestowed on him by the Englishmen, they took up their purses, and started off on their diplomatic expedition, up the grand staircase into the ‘*Imperial Abode of Bliss*.’ On entering the gallery they found the poor old odalisques, who formed the residue of the ladies of the harem, and their *oustas*, profiting by their freedom from the watchful guardianship of the eunuchs, in romping around the apartment.’”

“Ah!” interrupted the Cocona, laughing as she pictured the scene thus presented to her mind’s eye. “I have seen such ladies at their sports. They have the habit of gathering up their robes tightly round their obese forms on such occasions, and look most ludicrous objects, with their lofty cardboard caps of various colours, decorated with gold and silver bells. Their principal fun consists, I remember, in running after each other in a circle, knocking off each other’s caps, and then scrambling for them in the centre. The great difficulty which some of the most unwieldy of the ladies experience in getting to their feet again, after being tripped up by their companions and laid sprawling on the carpet, affords them infinite amusement, and invariably elicits peals of joyous laughter.”

“*Taib! Taib!*” responded Yusuf, gravely; and then proceeded to resume Hassan Ali’s narrative.

“The eunuchs, on entering, were immediately surrounded by the inquisitive ladies, who, in unison chorus, exclaimed, “*Bou gun havadis vârne?*” (“What

is the news to-day ?”) To this general inquiry, Soudan Ali, who represented the chief of the deputation, responded by handing over the five purses of paras to Kadidjee, the mother of the harem, and informing her that one of them was for herself, and that the remainder were to be distributed among her children, as he designated the other antiquities. At this pleasant intelligence there was but one shout,—“*Mashallah! Mashallah! Allah kereem! Ajaib! Ajaib! cristi Tchelebris?*” (“What is your pleasure?”) So noisy and animated was the little scene of feminine curiosity, that it was with some difficulty silence was restored, and Soudan Ali was able to explain to Kadidjee Khanoum the complaisance which was required of them.

““*Pek-eyi Bougun gundujun alercenez*” (“Most willingly! You shall have them in the twinkling of an eye. Ay! this very day”) was the response of the delighted women.

““*Beni öldutmaï acenez*” (“Do not disappoint me”), said Soudan Ali; and, with this last observation, he returned with his fellow-eunuchs to their hall.

““They had not long to wait. Several *oustas* soon appeared, bearing not only rich dresses in store, but jewels of every description, and artificial flowers, together with the whole pharmacopœia of Oriental cosmetics. It is utterly impossible for me, who am neither expert as a *ressam* (artist), nor a *khateb* (secretary), to attempt to give you any finished picture of the ludicrous scenes which followed whilst the *oustas* were endeavouring to metamorphose the dark-skinned guardian gentry of the harem—for I had taken all the

white eunuchs with me to Ismid—into representatives of those traditional types of beauty, Circassian, Georgian, and Turkish houris. The helplessness displayed by the poor eunuchs in donning their female attire, the difficulty they experienced in affecting the waddling gait of the odalisques, much as they were accustomed to witness it every hour, and the awkwardness of all their movements, created shrieks of laughter among the ladies of the harem, who had come in under the pretext of assisting their *oustas* in the application of their marvellous cosmetics, by the power of which it was possible to make black, white. Eastern washes and dyes, however, are truly wonderful. Even at this first rehearsal of the fantasia to be enacted, the countenances of the dusky eunuchs became as white as alabaster; the tint of roses rested on their cheeks, their lips were ruby bright, and their hands and arms were suffused with a pink shade as beautiful as that which adorns the loveliest damsels of the icy-cold West. Their jet-black orbs sparkled like "*suns in a sky of diamonds.*" Their head-dresses were composed of pink, yellow, blue, and crimson crape kerchiefs, bound across their foreheads. In front of these bands were fastened tiaras of diamonds; superb diamond necklaces ornamented their whitened necks. They were attired in costly silk, satin, and velvet robes, encircled round the waist by richly-embroidered Cashmere shawls. The rest of their attire consisted of jackets of blue, pink, and red velvet, lined with white satin, and trimmed with gold buttons and precious stones, together with loose trousers of costly fabric. Their legs were encased in

pink silk stockings; their feet covered with *mezzes* (yellow morocco-leather shoes) over which they wore *báboogs* (slippers down at heel). At all events, the patience and perseverance bestowed on beautifying these singular odalisques were well rewarded; the result was admirable. The whole dramatic body of these *arkadash* was actually transmogrified, not only into passable, but even into marvellous imitations of the charmers of the terrestrial odalick of the all-glorious Caliph, the Sultan of Turkey.

“A *second* rehearsal of the forthcoming comedy followed. There sat Kaleb, as superintendent and director of this strange fantasia, on a raised divan-cushion, richly embroidered with gold stars and silver crescents, puffing at his chibouque of costly diamond-studded workmanship. Before the divan was placed a wide footstool, covered with rich material; and around it were squatted, on satin cushions placed on the matted floor, the improvised ladies of the harem in a formal semicircle, with their faces all turned towards their fictitious lord and master. As soon as my kaymakam had made a minute inspection of his troop, to see that there was no detecting flaw in the adornments of these wonderful ladies, the rest of the performance was duly gone through. Kaleb clapped his hands; a band of richly-attired little atoms of humanity entered; and the whole party was served with sweetmeats, cakes, confectionery, and coffee, the findjans of which were chosen from the Sultan's rarest transparent Japan and China ware, resting on rich gold filigree zarfs, encrusted with diamonds and other precious stones. The rascal was

resolved, you see, that all the accessories of his comedy should be of the best. Then "*Bir atech!*" ("Bring fire!"), was shouted by Kaleb, and the pieces of live charcoal, held by small silver pincers, were handed round to the occupants of the cushions for the lighting of their cigarettes. But this was almost too much for the gravity of the improvised ladies; as they stretched forth their white-painted and henna-tipped fingers to pick their cigarettes from the gold salvers on which they were placed, a peal of irresistible laughter burst from the assembly. The abruptness of the movement was little in keeping with the feminine character assumed.

"The *crowning* scene of the rehearsal, however, according to all that I have heard,' continued Hassan Ali, 'took place in the inimitable manner with which Sorab Ali and Yaneh, two of the aptest and cleverest of the troop, enacted that movement, full of timid grace, with which they were to present to each of the duped Englishmen a floral offering, consisting of a rose and a yellow gilliflower—that most delicious of all flowers for its scent—taken from the bouquet they held in their painted hands, whilst they uttered at the same time the well-known cry of the nosegay vendors of Stamboul, "*The rose was a thorn; from the sweat of the Prophet it blossomed.*" The gestures, with which they endeavoured to vie with one another, in their delineations of a woman's delicate instincts, called forth to correct all that might have been considered too bold on a *first* impulse, were masterpieces of finished acting; unsurpassed, I should say, by those delineators of nature



of whom I have heard speak in *Frenk* playhouses. I myself should have scarcely given our *sardeg*s credit for such apt scholarship in the coquettish manners of our odalisques, but rather have supposed them to have played an awkward caricature, more like the comic scenes of our friend Karaghueze, had I not been assured of their consummate art. All credit must be given, at the same time, to the able manner in which Kaleb performed his character as director of the troop, and drilled his *two* cleverest members into so perfect an impersonation of the characters assigned them.

“‘At length came the *final* rehearsal. On this occasion the whole comedy was played out in the locality selected for the due performance of this strange fantasia. The spot was the Rococo Kiosk, standing in the now wild and neglected grounds of the old Seraglio, the latticed windows of which rise above the dilapidated walls of the imperial domains. (Perhaps you do not know it,’ pursued Hassan Ali, turning more directly to Yusuf; ‘this kiosk is flanked by a grove of tall cypresses and spreading plane trees; and beneath it, jutting over the flagstone embankment which faces the sea, is that very “*shoot*” so renowned in our stories of sudden death, to which I have already had occasion to make allusion.)

“‘My kaymakam,’ continued the Grand Eunuch, ‘had selected that edifice for the scene of his fantasia with all that tact for which he is so justly celebrated. He knew that beneath the stage of his mocking comedy was a secret issue, which placed at his command the means of facilitating the departure of his

guests without the cognizance of the inquisitive inmates of the harem.

“The little boy attendants had been occupied all the day in arranging the interior of the kiosk for this last grand rehearsal. The room is circular in form, lighted by numerous trellised windows, and almost entirely surrounded by rich crimson satin divans, bespangled with gold stars and silver crescents. Oval mirrors, which reach to the ground, are let into the walls on all sides. The ceiling, evidently fashioned in imitation of the far-famed dome of the Taj-Mahal at Agra, is ornamented, like its prototype, with clusters of fruit, flowers, and foliage, composed in light and artistic Mosaic workmanship, of jasper, agate, lapis lazuli, cornelian, and, in short, every available stone of colour. It is evident from the chaste, though gorgeous imitations of those beauties of nature, that the designer has endeavoured to convey to the human mind some faint idea of the indescribable charms of the Harem Paradise of the Prophet. The floor, with the exception of a large square in the centre, which disguised the secret trap of issue, is covered with a superb Smyrna carpet. The cornices are elaborately gilded; the door and windows are tapestried with hangings of crimson damask fringed with bullion. Here and there stand small ormolu tables adorned with rich gilt time-pieces, some marking the hour by Turkish and others by European calculation; the former being regulated every morning by the clock of the Great Mosque, according to the commencement of the day on the rising of the sun, the latter being allowed to go very much at

random. On these tables also were placed beautiful painted vases of Sèvres porcelain water-cups, with stands to match, and bouquets of the choicest flowers to gratify the peculiar fancies of the odalisques of the Sultan's *Mansion of Bliss.*'"

"Yes," remarked the Cocona, "I know their *penchant* well. The Language of Flowers is as familiar to them as the missal to the cloistered nuns of our western countries. I have often watched the rapidity with which they have composed their toy-like bouquets, blending grace of form with design in meaning, which I myself gradually learned to decipher; and I may own that many an intrigue, many a domestic conspiracy, has been detected, and actually nipped in the bud by me, owing to the knowledge I acquired of this language of flowers."

"'In this stately kiosk chamber,'" pursued the Mohaddety, resuming Ali Hassan's narrative, "'were ranged in due squatting posture on the divans, facing the entrance, the masquerading houris of the hour. Each held in the left hand, the right hand being only used by Orientals, as you may have seen, Khanoum Effendem, for the *salaam*, a small filigree-work bouquet-holder, thickly incrustated with diamonds, containing the choicest variety of blossoms. Sorab Ali and Yaneh held their special nosegays of roses and gilliflowers alone. When Kaleb had seated himself on the rich divan, placed on the right side of the entrance, two young eunuchs advanced and laid a handsome rug over the square place of the mysterious *oubliette*. On this were placed two elegant gilt chairs, beside which two

other eunuchs, attired in the Nizam uniform, took their stand, baring their blue Damascus steel swords, the blades of which were inlaid, like those of the Pachas, with verses of the Koran in letters of gold, the edges of which were as keen as that of the scimitar of the renowned Saláh-é-Deen when he cut his floating gauze scarf in twain in the presence of the *Frenk* warrior and king, named Cœur de Lion.

“To this *last* rehearsal all the old ladies of the harem, and their attendant *oustas*, had been invited, as to the great rehearsal of the *fantasia* to be given to some friendly *arkadash*. None had the smallest suspicion that the vile dogs of Christians, the audacious and sacrilegious *Frenks*, were to be admitted on the following evening, and rendered dupes of this elaborate comedy. They squatted around in a semicircle opposite to Kaleb beyond the trap, highly amused at the scene before them, and duly served with coffee, sweetmeats, and cigarettes.

“At a signal given by Kaleb, two of the youngest eunuchs appeared at the entrance of the room, and walking to the centre, sat themselves down in the *kursis*. They were intended to represent, on this occasion, the two distinguished foreign guests of the following evening. The usual refreshments were now served to the whole party of mummers. More costly appointments had been now lent by the remaining ladies of the harem, and the false odalisques in masquerade were even more superbly dressed than at any previous rehearsal. As soon as the service was completed, the two most fascinating of the sham odalisques,

Sorab Ali and Yaneh, who had now become thorough proficient in their parts, rose from the divan, shuffled in feminine steps towards the supposed foreigners, knelt at their feet, and respectfully presented them with the appointed rose and gilliflower for acceptance, uttering the usual cry, "*From the sweat of the Prophet it blossomed.*" At the moment that the diminutive representatives of the distinguished *Frenks* stretched forth their hands to receive the tribute offered them, the two eunuchs posted on either side of the *kursis*, placed their feet on the secret springs of the descending trap, concealed from sight by the thick rug. On this, *kursis*, rug, and simulated *Frenks* all suddenly disappeared beneath the floor as if by magic art. Shortly they reappeared, however; the eunuchs had removed their feet from the machinery. My lieutenant was delighted beyond measure at the success with which the rehearsal of his plan for laughing in the beards of the deluded Englishmen was carried out. He roared outright with laughter. To this uproarious expression of merriment the whole chorus of *arkadash* responded, and no spectators shook their fat sides more lustily than the old ladies, who regarded the trick as designed for execution on two of the eunuchs attached to the suite of the nephew of his Highness the Sultan.

"Just as the golden sun had sunk to rest on the following evening, the Caïkdji Bachi, punctual to his appointment, ascended the sides of the English yacht. He found the two Englishmen seated in their elegant saloon, enjoying their dessert and quaffing glasses, not

of sherbet, like all pious true believers, but of that iced sparkling wine of France, champagne.

“ “ *Hosh gelden*,” said the Duke, handing the Caikdji a cheque on his bankers at Galata which he took out of his pocket-book. “This is for you, *babam*—ten thousand piastres. If you could only get such a freight every evening you would soon quit this amphibious kind of a life, I expect—purchase a kiosk in some snug picturesque spot, bowered in woods, and commanding an enchanting view over this sapphire-like river of yours—set up a harem, peopled by two stars of unsurpassed loveliness, and a whole host of slaves to administer to their numerous wants, and at the same time, most orthodox of Moslems as you are, to add to your own comfort and amusement, whenever you feel weary of simple connubial bliss. *Janum! Janum!* thou most worthy type of an Oriental Blue-Beard, I know enough of the injunctions of your Koran to be aware that Mahomet, the Prophet, allows you to have four *guélin* (wives). But such a number might be too much for your purse, I calculate; and the same Prophet has enjoined you likewise, you old kogâ, to maintain each in worthy state; and, what is more, the *Cadi* would order you to unloose the strings of that same purse were your wives to complain to him of their lack of treatment.” At this address, Barbab Ali, whose outdoor life exempted him from the habit of almost all of us Orientals to seek enjoyment in the dreaming of dreams, and taciturn broodings over imaginary visions, only smiled pleasantly and archly.”

“It is true,” said the Cocona, breaking in on Yusuf’s

discourse, "that we busy *Frenkler* generally look with wonder on Orientals who can remain so long motionless on their divans in their dense clouded atmosphere of tobacco, absorbed in thought, it might be supposed without one bright spark of intelligence ever seen to glimmer in their faces, but more apparently without thought, without one idea in their brains. They seem to us to have no longer any powers of the mind. If a gleam come into their lack-lustre eyes, it seems only to be that of *sensual* passion. We hear of them as addicted only to enervating and effeminate pleasures. Much of this condition may be ascribed, as I am aware, to the acquired habit of opium-smoking, and even opium-eating—an intoxication which if less brutal and offensive in its form than that of our western nations, is far more powerful and deleterious to the faculties of the mind. It is by this practice more than all that their souls droop and fall into such a state of sickly enervation, that no effect of wholesome energy can ever rescue them again. But this apathy of the Oriental I know, at the same time, is not in all cases so profound as it might appear. I am rather inclined to believe that there is many an enlightened and cultivated Moslem who rather plays a comedy of apathy than feels it really, who will pretend not to hear when hearing may be inconvenient to him, who will not notice what passes around when he would rather not know, and who would make the world believe in the truth of his impassive nature when the impassiveness is only the outer assumption of a worldly-wise man."

"*Taib! Taib!*" responded Yusuf, acquiescingly, and

proceeded to resume again the broken narrative of Hassan Ali. "The Caikdji of the Bosphorus took up his coveted order, placed it inside his shirt next his bronzed skin, and made his temena, exclaiming, "*Gel, gel! Effendiler, tchapouk guidélm!*" ("Come, come! noble sirs, let us be gone quickly!")

"*"Vakit tchok-da var"* ("We have plenty of time"), cried out Sir Robert, as he touched the bell on the table before them. On the butler making his appearance, he ordered him to bring coffee and cheroots. Then, pointing to a chair, he begged the weather-beaten Armatolian to be seated and to make free with all he found before him. The old Moslem *salt* helped himself to the luxuries he saw within his grasp, and for a time puffed away at his cheroot with due imperturbable gravity. But he felt the importance of the occasion, and, spite of his respect for his noble employers, he at length broke silence to warn them that it was necessary to be punctual to the appointment which had been made for them by Kaleb.

"*"Pekaye!"* assented one of the gallant English grandees, who having been attached for some time to a diplomatic mission in the East, spoke Turkish-like an Osmanlee, "*Tchapouk-edden! Iler neh kadar, tchapouk kalksak aye olour*" ("Make haste! The sooner we take our departure the better").

"A stiff north wind had suddenly sprung up, and came rushing violently down from the inhospitable Black Sea. The breakers on many parts of the coast were so violent that many a caikdji might be seen towing his boat from the shore by a line, unable to stem the force of the waters. Down the current came dark



carcasses of dogs, and ominous looking baskets, many of which may have contained the gory head of some favourite, and perhaps beauteous, slave, or the mangled remains of some wretched man. "*Dead houris tell no tales.*" And in this lovely seven-hilled capital of the Sublime Porte many are the human beings who disappear for ever; the world in general knows not how or whither. Ay, could the depths of the azure Bosphorus tell all their tales of death, the blood of the boldest would curdle, and the nerves of the stoutest quiver with horror. The night, however, was clear, and Luna shone resplendent in the heavens. Her beams danced along with the myriads of stars, which studded the firmament, on the troubled seething waters, and millions of firework sparks were dashed up from the oars of the Caikdji, as resplendent as rays of the sun on the spray of a cascade. The stream, thus traversed, was of the darkest indigo colour, and yet the beams of the moon were strong enough to penetrate to the sandy bottom of the Bosphorus. The whole scene was so fairy-like in its aspect, that it called forth expressions of delight even from the cold English travellers as they reclined on their soft, silk, cotton-wadded cushions.

"Barbab Ali, I repeat, was one of the most adroit boatmen of the Bosphorus. With steady expertness he guided his fragile bark through the boiling tumult of the current, which dashed past them with dizzy rapidity, even amidst the maze of vessels of all nations which at that time studded the Golden Horn. Soon they neared that singular dark and ominous-looking object—the formidable "*shoot.*" The Caikdji

Bachi looked up at it with so strange and fixed a gaze, that the attention of the Duke was attracted. He pointed to the hideous excrescence, and said "*Banah-bak! bou neh oladjak?*" ("Tell me! What is this?") "Oh, only the spot where the refractory odalisques of the all-powerful Sovereign of Islam find a watery grave as a just reward for their infidelity, in company with a serpent and a cat, as emblems of treachery and domestic infidelity," replied the Caikdji darkly, as he gave a last stroke of his oars to reach the shore through the flashing foam.

"The caik had reached the *scale*, where a host of Armenians, Greeks, Slavonians, Jews, and others were still lolling about to enjoy the freshening breeze after the intense heat of the day. As the three men landed they were immediately attended by two cawasses and several hammals carrying large plated lanterns.' It is forbidden, you should know, to perambulate the capital after sunset without either bearing a light oneself, or having a light borne before one. 'Thus escorted, the Englishmen reached the gateway of the entrance of the Old Seraglio.'

"This palace, which, as I have before remarked, was afterwards burned down," pursued Yusuf, speaking now in his own person to the Cocona for her especial information, "then stood on the site of the Palace of the Great Byzantine Empire. The spot lies on an angle at the extreme verge of the city, washed on two sides by the harbour and the Propontis. At that time, the old palace formed the most conspicuous object of the whole panorama of the Bosphorus. This winter

residence of the Grand Seignior was composed of a great mass of buildings, courts, and gardens, in the midst of which rose forests of the finest cypresses, and was encompassed by crenated walls with towers and gates, guarded by several pieces of ordnance. The site was indeed a glorious one, but its associations were mysterious and terrible. Within its walls Amurath III. murdered his five brothers, the Janissaries strangled two sultans, the Mufti put the Sultan Ibrahim to death for *immorality*, the Sultan Selim was assassinated, and Suliman the Great had two of his sons strangled in order to secure the throne for the offspring of his mistress Roxalana.

“‘Here the two English grandees,’” continued the Mohaddety, once more resuming the narrative of the Grand Eunuch, “‘took leave of the Caikdji of the Bosphorus, after receiving the assurance from him that he would await their return at the Scale. Barbab Ali saw them safely made over to the care of one of our arkadash, who had been deputed by my kaymakam to receive them, uttering, as a farewell token, the words, “*O-our-Olah, selamet-ileh!*” (“May your way be fortunate, and safety attend you!” &c.), made his temena, and went his way.

“‘Hastily traversing a garden studded with gigantic cypresses of funereal air, a very wilderness in its sombre and neglected state, the two Englishmen were led to the actual entrance of the Old Seraglio. At the foot of the wooden staircase they were constrained to leave their overshoes, as already forewarned by the Caikdji Bachi; and thus they entered the noble hall,

where their old acquaintance Kaleb received them, and ushered them into my reception room. Here coffee and chibouques were served.

“After a due time spent in these formalities of hospitality, my kaymakam again arose, and, attended by his staff of eunuchs, conducted his guests across the gardens arranged after the French fashion. Then, passing through the apartments of the *itchoglans* (pages), where they found the *Tchaouch Agassi* (chief of the pages) gravely smoking his pipe on a divan, they ascended the flight of marble steps, and reached that wondrous specimen of bronze-work, more exquisite even than the gates now possessed by the French, at Versailles, and carried off from the city of the Knights of St. John—the library door. Pressed though they were by their desire to arrive at the great climax of their visit, the *Frenk* travellers could not but pause, however, to look with interest on the contents of the great cedar-wood bookcases, which line the interesting apartment within. They remarked even on the arrangement, so peculiar to them, by which the gilded edges of the illuminated Arabic manuscripts are turned outside, and the backs away; and they actually stayed their steps to examine the curious genealogical tree of *all* the illustrious sovereigns of Islam.’

“Your Highness has, of course, never seen this remarkable manuscript?” said Yusuf, interrupting himself to address the Grand Pacha more directly; “and a description of it may be found of interest. It was drawn up on thick parchment, and was suspended on a roller, like those maps of various countries which have

reached us from the Western lands. Appended to the name of each deity of Islam was an oval-shaped miniature medallion, executed in colours, intended to represent a correct portrait of each Grand Seignior. This design can scarcely be said to have been fulfilled, however, as all those '*Sovereigns of the world,*' even to the most modern times, were represented as attired in the old rich Turkish costume of the East, and with long dark, flowing, black beards, when the costumes they have long since worn have been the simple Nizam paletot and richly gold-embroidered undercoat, without that ancient exuberance of beard."

"Allow me again to remark," interrupted the Cocona, smiling, "on the incongruity of the deities of Islam, who, while they absolutely declare that the Koran condemns the use of all images, both plastic and pictorial, and forbids all decorations in mosques, palaces, and buildings, public or private, thereby depriving all architects and painters of the opportunity of displaying their skill and resources in ornamentation, and interdicting the cultivation of art among the people, so peculiarly sensitive to all that is beautiful in art, as well as nature, yet in themselves, as '*Lights of the world,*' repudiate the rigorous execution of the Prophet's law, and, without seeming by any means to scandalise the most orthodox of Mussulmen, have their own portraits openly perpetuated."

Yusuf only shook his head, and then continued—"This library of the old Seraglio was looked on as one of the most revered apartments of the Deity of Islam. At one time it was the favourite resort of the

*Sheik-el-Islam* (the Moslem Patriarch), who is regarded, Khanoum Effendem, as the next in rank, in Islamism, to the very Sultan himself. Early every morning might he be seen, attended by a large suite of *ulemahs* (prelates), in his snow-white kaftan and turban, crossed by a massive band of gold, seated on a divan, with an Arabic manuscript on his lap.

“But to pursue the course of the story narrated to me by Hassan Ali. ‘The two Giaours on leaving the library were led on towards a portal, profusely ornamented with carvings of flowers and arabesques, and flanked by two recesses; and here they again paused to remark on what they called “*the execrable taste*” of two Chinese perspectives, with which each side was decorated. Otherwise, they affirmed, the richly-decorated and columned arcades, formed by the projections of the roof, and supported as they are by elegantly-sculptured pillars, together with that beautiful slab of verd antique, sculptured with Arabic inscriptions, which forms the sill of that superb portal, would have afforded a perfect specimen of the best Byzantine architecture. Another object, which likewise attracted their especial notice, was the peculiar structure of the lintel. “Why,” asked the *Frenk* duke, “is it constructed so very low that it is impossible for any ordinarily sized man to enter erect?”—“Simply,” replied my kaymakam, “because by this arrangement no mortal man, whatever be his rank or his pretensions, can ever enter the presence of the All-powerful Deity of Islam without bending his body in token of respect, and thus making his temena whether he will or no.”

“A flight of magnificent marble steps was now ascended from the portal, and the Giaours then stood within the *takht odassy* (the throne room), which is acknowledged to be the gem of gems of all the wondrous beauties of the Old Seraglio. Nearly facing the tapestry of the entrance stands the revered *takht*, an elaborately-worked gold divan, richly ornamented with a complicated maze of threads, imitating the hetus-work of Byzantine carvings—blended, crossed, and interlaced, as if by fairy hands. So marvellous is this workmanship that it may be regarded as due to the combined handicraft of all the most skilful goldsmiths of the universe; and even those who spin the spider threads of gold-work in the cities of the West could never—it is generally admitted—produce any fabric which could equal it in the excellence of its design, or the fineness of its interlacings. Above this throne hangs a canopy of rich crimson silk, supported by handsome, gold fluted columns, which are magnificently encrusted with uncut precious stones of every possible description. Around hang large gold balls, surmounted crescents of the same material, and from which flow long tails of horsehair. In truth, such a throne, in its gorgeous magnificence, is in full keeping with that exalted sanctity investing the great Deity of Islam.

“The Giaours were doubtless amazed with this scene of splendour. They must have felt the enchantment of the place. Rays of rose-tinted light fell from the hundreds of pink wax candles burning in the superb chandeliers which hung from the centre of the magnificent ceiling, and made the gold fretwork and carvings

sparkle'on every side. This ceiling is in itself a wondrous work of art, with its silver-gilt compartments, representing beds of roses. Another feature, also, of this truly imperial room is a richly enamelled niche, with a conical, gold, highly-ornamented dome, containing a gilt *mangal* (charcoal-brazier). Close by the entrance and facing the *takht* stands a massive gilded fretwork screen, which, in former days, served as a sort of wicket-gate, behind the gold bars of which all *Frenk Eltchiler* (foreign ambassadors) were kept standing when admitted to an audience with the then unapproachable presence of the Deity of Islam. This screen, Yusuf, is even more beautiful than the golden lattice let into the walls of the council chamber, behind which, concealed by rose-coloured curtains, reclines the mighty Sultan, clothed in invisibility, during the sittings of his *divan* (cabinet council).

“The Giaours had been led thus far solely to be plunged into due amazement by the brilliant wonders of the imperial palace. They were then made to retrace their steps to the entrance of the actual seraglio. Here they were permitted to resume their over-shoes. A liberal purse of paras was handed by them to the eunuch who stood as janitor, by the way of baksheesh, and they were then invited to accompany Kaleb through the grounds, gloomy with cypresses, sycamores, and planes, until they reached the heavy embattled wall, against which stands the Rococo-kiosk. Here at the entrance they were received by a staff of eunuchs, who ushered them into the circular room, which was to be for the nonce the stage of the projected fantasia-comedy.



Since the previous evening the apartment had been still further decorated by large vases of painted porcelain, containing the choicest flowers—roses of every tint, even to that exquisite *green*, which our gardeners know how to produce by artificial appliances; delicious gilliflowers of purple and gold colour; the favourite basil, and hundreds of other sweet blossoms; and around were placed large tubs, into which had been transplanted for the occasion sweetly-scented myrtles and dwarf willows. The whole scene was, indeed, one to charm the eyes and stimulate the senses of the infatuated intruders on the sacred precincts. No enchanted palace of the Peris could have more enraptured the gazers.

“The two adventurous Giaours were ceremoniously conducted by Kaleb to the two gilt chairs which stood in a central position on the beautiful Persian rug which covered the oubliette. The director of the comedy having duly salaamed his guests and retired to his divan, clapped his hands for the commencement of the mock-fantasia. At this signal, the whole troop of supposed odalisques shuffled into the room, and proceeded to squat themselves with due feminine airs and graces on the divans facing their unwonted visitors. Two stalwart eunuchs, nearly seven feet high each, dressed in Nizam uniform, then followed, and took up their positions on either side of the two amazed Giaours with highly-tempered Damascus blades most ominously shown. This suspicious proceeding, however, could not deter the *Frenks* from scrutinising the troop of odalisques before them. The masquerading houris had

been so admirably got up, that the delusion was complete. With a little stretch of imagination, some of them may have been said to have looked of beauty unsurpassed, as they sat before their *Frenk* admirers, resplendent in the priceless jewels with which their robes and head-dresses glittered, holding in their hands their lovely bouquets of choice flowers, and smoking their cigarettes with admirably assumed composure.

“ ‘The Duke and Sir Robert appeared in a paroxysm of delight. They seemed to gaze with rapture on the lovely bevy of Odaliskes exposed to their delighted gaze, and looked as though they thought no such loveliness had ever before been seen by mortal eyes since veils first covered the stars of a harem. During this pause in the comedy the usual refreshments were handed around. Kaleb, however, was at last impatient to bring his mock performance to an end. He clapped his hands; and Soudan Ali and Yaneh rose to fulfil the graceful functions allotted to them. Both were magnificently dressed. The latter wore round his waist that superb diamond girdle, valued at four millions of piastres, which was presented to the Princess Zeneb Khanoum, the daughter of Mahomet Ali the Great, on her marriage with Khamil Pacha, and which the adroit Yaneh had contrived to borrow from the Mother of the Harem of that Princess, who happened to be on a visit to the Sultana Validé.”

“ *Oileh-der* ” (“Exactly so”), said the Cocona, interjectionally.

“ ‘The two simulated stars of loveliness waddled towards the distinguished guests with all those affect-

tations of modest airs which they had learned so well to assume, salaamed them with the prettiest grace imaginable, knelt at their feet, and presented the prescribed rose and gilliflower with the true nosegay-vendor's speech. As fate would have it, as they were in the very act of making their last salutation, their head-dresses became unfastened, fell, and displayed to view two shaven skulls. The two Giaours, who were on the point of taking the proffered flowers with outstretched hands, rose from their *kursis* in evident amazement and bewilderment at this unexpected sight. But, at the same moment, the gigantic sentinels placed their feet on the secret springs of the trap. In an instant chairs, rug, distinguished foreigners, one and all disappeared with a heavy thumping sound. In another, the lift arose again, but *empty* now! At this sight deafening roars of laughter pealed through the room. The whole troop of mummers could contain themselves no longer. Amidst the peals of merriment were heard the shouts, "*Mashallah! Mashallah! Janum! Janum!* We now can laugh in the beards of the *Franks*." Again the apartment rang with the tremendous yells of laughter; and then the whole chorus of masqueraders thundered forth, as with one voice, "*Allah-il-Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah!*"

"The echo of these shouts had scarcely died away when the tramping of infantry was heard. A body of Imperial Guards was advancing towards the kiosk, accompanied by the band, playing the Sultan's March, one of Donizetti's brother's *noisiest* compositions. At this announcement my kaymakam immediately gave

orders for an instantaneous transformation of his body of mummers into their customary attire. Rapidly the female robes were cast aside. It was at this exciting juncture that I myself raised a corner of the tapestry covering the entrance, and stood, like an avenging angel, before the eyes of my dumbfounded *arkadash*. I shall never forget the scene of confusion which met my eyes. The floor of the kiosk was strewn with rich dresses—silk kerchiefs of every shape and colour, velvet jackets, embroidered slippers, and rich brocaded trousers. On the divans around were scattered diamond tiaras, necklaces, sprays, and all sorts of ornaments of the most costly jewellery. In groups stood the boy attendants, holding basins of water, in which the late beauteous odalisques were endeavouring to scrub the paint and cosmetics off their faces, arms, and hands. Those who had never doffed their Nizam uniform were standing near the trap smoking cheroots, and laughing immoderately at their discomfited brethren, who were actually tearing off their feminine attire in a state of distress, and at the flurry of the attendant boys, who were hurrying hither and thither with all the wardrobe of the late comedy, heaping in corners the rich robes and costly jewels as though they were mere valueless dross.

“‘ Suddenly my eye fell on the square space in the centre of the room, which was now denuded of its rug. The oubliette had evidently been lately used. Suspicions began now to thicken on me, that some trick had been played, and that my cunning *arkadash* had availed themselves of my absence to indulge in very questionable amusement. I summoned Kaleb to attend me, with

some severity. When we reached the eunuchs' hall, and I had seated myself, I questioned him, and insisted on a knowledge of the truth. After a very slight hesitation, my lieutenant at last thought it more prudent to relate to me the whole story, exactly as I have narrated it to you.

“Naturally anxious to prevent any unpleasant results, which might arise from the execution of Kaleb's reprehensible remedy, I despatched Soudan Ali, in all haste, to beat up, and bring before me, the Caikdji of the Bosphorus. After the lapse of about an hour that worthy made his appearance. At first, he seemed very much inclined to evade my interrogations, under the impression, possibly, that I intended making him disgorge a portion of his ill-gotten baksheesh. As he gained confidence relative to that point, however, he eventually consented to relate all he knew of the affair and its sequel. I learned then, that, as soon as he had handed over the two Englishmen to the escort of the eunuchs, at the entrance gate of the Seraglio, he had returned to his own home, and despatched his two gaunt sons to await, with his largest caïk, whatever Allah might send them on the waters beneath the famous “shoot.” With all his efforts to put faith in the avowed good intentions of his friend Kaleb, he was still haunted by the idea that my lieutenant might perhaps yet change his mind, and cause the adventurous Giaours to be strangled, or perhaps made into sexless beings, like the other inmates of the Seraglio. The doubt as to what his two boys might receive in his caïk remained a heavy burden on his mind. He had no wish to lose

the hard-earned renown he had gained, for honesty, skill, and punctuality as a guide. He knew likewise, that the Dragoman of the Frenks, who was a man of great importance, and moreover the *brother-in-law* of one of the most influential bankers, bore him already a grudge; and should that *Yahoodée*, whose lot he knew would be *Djehannum*, ever catch him as the accomplice in such a disastrous affair, he was aware he should be ruined for life. He gave, therefore, the most stringent instructions to his sons, who were unknown to the two strangers.

“It appeared, then, that the two young caikdjis had not long rowed their caik to the mysterious spot, indicated by their father, when down fell chairs, rug, and distinguished foreigners on their heads, making that thumping sound, which Kaleb had already described, as reverberating throughout the kiosk. The two daring Frenks seemed to have been completely stunned by their fall at first; however, by a little attention of the two young boatmen they soon recovered. On coming to their senses they stared vacantly around them, for some moments, as if unable to understand their position. Their fall appeared to have left a sort of blot on their memories. Gradually they called to mind, that, a short time before, they had been feasting their eyes on a bevy of lovely Peris. Then the strange incident of the falling head-dresses crossed their minds, and began to excite grave doubts as to the nature of the spectacle for which they had paid so dearly. Whether they really comprehended thoroughly how far the Moslems had laughed in their beards must ever remain a mystery. At the time, they felt only too

thankful at having escaped a fearful death, or a disaster almost more fearful still. On questioning their young boatmen, they were informed that chance alone had brought them to the spot; such were their father's instructions. The first step of the two still bewildered Englishmen was to have themselves rowed to the *Terrible* man-of-war, which lay close by. There they were met by their friend, Captain Boscawen, to whom, after he had taken them to his saloon, and placed necessary refreshments before them, they narrated their adventure. The gallant sailor laughed immoderately at the recital, but strongly advised his adventurous fellow-countrymen to return to their yacht at once, leave the Golden Horn as speedily as possible, and never again attempt to feast their Giaour eyes on the charms of cloistered odalisques, after the narrow escape for their lives they had already experienced. So to their yacht they returned, had the steam got up, and departed with what expedition they might, along with the steam frigate. It was the salute to them from the castles of the Dardanelles that we heard, just as you, brother Yusef, came to visit us.'"

Here the venerable Mohaddetyn paused. This last strange incident of harem life had greatly amused the little Prince, who ordered several purses of paras to be bestowed as baksheesh on the Kislak Agaci. Yusuf made his temena, and quitted the apartment, promising to return on the following evening; the ladies of the harem shuffled away with their attendants, and his Highness the Grand Pacha was soon in his own chamber to enjoy the "*heavy honey dew of slumber.*"

## CHAPTER IV.

HER Highness the Princess Zeneb—the *Princesse Epouse*, as she is always designated—having heard from the little darling of her heart a most flattering account of the interesting manner in which the amateur Mohad-detyne had performed his functions as narrator, had resolved, on the following day as she awoke from her *kef*, to betake herself to the young Prince's reception-room, in order to have her own share in the amusement. As she entered the apartment she found the aged eunuch on the very point of resuming his recital of his various reminiscences, when on active service.

At the sight of her Highness the whole of the party already occupying the room rose to receive her with due honour. After doubling herself up *à la Turque* on the divan facing the entrance, her Highness made a sign to the Grand Pacha to sit by her side, on her right hand; and a similar invitation to be seated was made, on the left-hand side, to the Cocona. I may as well here remark that it was by this title the governess was invariably addressed, until his Highness the Viceroy Ismael Pacha gave orders that she should always be greeted under the appellation of "*Madame*." Then her Highness motioned to the venerable Kislâr Agaci, and the whole of the surrounding retinue, to *otour*,



and clapped her hands. Several slaves immediately entered, carrying silver trays, on which were placed glass dishes filled with Turkish sweetmeats and preserves. These were duly handed by the bearers, kneeling to her Highness, then to the Grand Pacha, the Cocona, and the ladies of the harem who had accompanied the *Princesse Epouse*. Others followed with gold salvers, with elegant findjans of Japan porcelain, in gold filigree *zarfs*. These little *zarfs* the slaves removed, holding them adroitly between the thumb and finger of the right hand; and thus they presented them to her Highness, and then to the whole assembly. It may be here remarked that in honour of the presence of the *Princesse Epouse*, the company, before and after partaking of these refreshments, considered themselves bound to make her the customary salutations. Cigarettes being then handed round, and lighted by the usual pieces of live charcoal, held in silver tongs, the amiable Yusuf prepared, as soon as all were engaged in smoking, to resume his descriptions and narrative.

The poor old eunuch, however, seemed, even before his commencement, to be oppressed with illness. From whatever cause it arose, he looked unusually pale and languid. It was with an evident effort that he endeavoured to rally, so as to satisfy the demands of their Highnesses with sufficient vivacity. He began, however, prefacing his narrative with the remark that he was about to return to the description of the departure of the Hadjis, which he had interrupted in his desire to give the story illustrating the manner in which

Frenk travellers have been deluded into supposing they have been favoured with the sight of the Peris caged in the harem.

“The crowd which thronged the great square of Cairo during the gathering of the pilgrims,” he resumed, “had other stoppages than those I have mentioned to free circulation. These impediments are those customary to all throngs in Eastern cities. I speak of the hundreds of mean, gaunt, mangy, voracious-looking *kelbs*, which thrust themselves between men’s legs in all directions. It was, as usual, in the vicinity of the stalls of the itinerant vendors of *kebabs* (morsels of roasted meat on iron skewers), of the *djiguerdjis* (sellers of sheep’s liver), of the pancake and pastry merchants, of the hawkers of dohnas, beccapios, and snails, or of the *Hakwajis* (dispensers of *hakva*, a paste made of almonds, honey, and perfumed essences), and *cheberdjis* (sweetmeat and sugar sellers), that they became a fearful nuisance; yet I must own that these persecuting animals, troublesome as they are, never attempt to molest the passengers, or snatch any delicacies from the hands of the children, crammed with eatables by their fond parents. I have seen a whole procession of hungry dogs and cats thronging harmlessly after the vendors of the sheep’s plucks, for their own eating, strung on long poles. These hawkers drive a very lucrative business,” said Yuşuf, interrupting himself, and turning to the Cocona. “The Islam creed, Khanoum Effendem, permits neither cats nor dogs to starve; the latter animals, indeed, are especial favourites in Moslem households.”

The old eunuch paused. He was evidently faint. Seeing his condition, I bethought me of a manner to spare him further fatigue.

“I can well understand the good manners of these ‘scavengers of the East,’ as we term the dogs in these countries,” I said; “and I could relate on this subject a singular incident which occurred to myself when at Constantinople. As you, Kislár Agaci, seem much indisposed this evening, and not in a fit state to continue the functions you have so well assumed, perhaps her Highness,” pursued the Cocona, addressing herself to the *Princess Epouse*, “will permit me to attempt, for once, to play the part of Mohaddetyñ, and narrate my own story.”

“*Mashallah! Mashallah, Madame! Boudau beyyuk mécerret bédénizé olámax*” (“Bravo! Bravo! It will give me the greatest pleasure”), replied her Highness, patting the Cocona on her back, according to her customary wont when delighted with any one near her.

Whereupon the Cocona proceeded to narrate the story of her faithful Turkish *kelb*.

“Your Highness no doubt remembers how ill-health obliged me, during our stay in Constantinople, to obtain leave of absence from you for three months, to proceed to Alexandria. I was anxious, at the same time, as your Highness is well aware, to embark as quickly as possible, in order to place before his Highness the Viceroy *certain facts* which it was the interest of other people to keep from his ears. But the fates were against my speedy departure. Whilst awaiting the sailing of the packet, I took up my quarters at L’Hotel

d'Orient, at Pera, every other hotel in the place being already overcrowded. In traversing the mazes of that bewildering city, where the streets are all unmarked by names, and the houses all unnumbered, I should constantly have run considerable risk of losing my way, had it not been for a strange guide. This was a large, lean, gaunt dog, who had installed himself my *satir* (protector) and dragoman at the same time. The manner in which I made the acquaintance of this truly valuable friend and faithful companion, to whom I afterwards gave the name of 'Hector,'—the poor animal not being able to tell me any designation he might previously have borne,—was simple enough.

“One morning, when I was proceeding to visit her Britannic Majesty's Vice-Consul, to whom I am indebted for many acts of kindness and attention, I stumbled on my way on the ungainly beast. Being naturally partial to animals, I patted him caressingly on the back, albeit his aspect was rather of the ferocious order than otherwise. His instinct seemed immediately to tell him that I was his *friend*, and not his enemy. Instead of snarling at me, as many of these hungry wandering *kelbs* do when Europeans cross their path, he nestled nearer to me and caressed my hand. He then endeavoured to pull me gently aside towards the stall of an itinerant *kebabdji* (vendor of kebabs), and looked me so wistfully and imploringly in the face that my heart was melted at once. I loosened my purse strings, handed a few paras to the impassive retailer of the delicate morsels, and then taking hold of the small iron skewer with my gloved hand, gave the *kebab* to the eager dog.

He devoured it with infinite relish, licked his lips, looked gratefully in my face, and then, as I moved onwards, escorted me gallantly to the British Consulate.

“I remained a considerable time to transact my business. When I came out I was somewhat bewildered. I sought in vain in my mind for a clue by which I might be enabled to regain my domicile. His Excellency, your Highness’s Chamberlain, had kindly offered to place a soldier at my orders, but I had declined the honour, and now the difficulty of retracing my steps made me feel a regret for the absence of the proffered escort. I was roused from my reverie by a whine. By my side was my grateful friend, the *kelb*. ‘Can you find my way for me?’ I said, jestingly. He looked at me and wagged his tail, as if to reply, as well as dog was able, that he both could and *would*. Of his ability to guide me through that filthy, puzzling, and dangerous city, I was still foolish enough to have my doubts. But I felt that he might be a safeguard to me, lonely unprotected female as I was, in a place where all females, of all grades of society and of every nationality, except indeed Moslem women, are exposed to obloquy and insult, and even worse chances.

“It is no *delusive* dream of mine, and I know well that you will corroborate my assertion,” added the Cocona, addressing herself directly to the venerable Yusuf, “when I state that, in the capital of the Ottoman Empire miscreants have been known to buy, trap, spirit away, buy and sell Christian women, and to have shipped them off like merchandise with a bill of lading, to be caged in the harems of the princely and

wealthy, and perhaps finally poisoned or strangled, bundled into sacks or stuffed into wicker baskets, and despatched to the bottom of the dreaded Bosphorus. My experiences of *indoor life* in Turkey have revealed to me *facts* which have made me shudder as I passed the ruins of the Old Seraglio, as I frequently have done in the Viceregal caïks, and looked on that mysterious 'shoot' to which you have so pointedly alluded in your story of the two English Giaours.

"At all events I had some chance of protection then in the guardianship of my four-footed Janissary. My trust was fully realised. Never was the fidelity of the canine race more strikingly exemplified than in the manner he resolutely showed fight to any one who dared approach me; and, still more, never was sagacity more marked than in the strange mysterious instinct with which my *kelb* guided me to the spot I desired to reach. On arriving at the hotel I hurried to my room, took a few Palmer's biscuits out of a tin case which stood on the side-table, opened a window and threw them to my good *satir*, who had squatted himself on the sand, and was gazing watchfully and inquiringly at the windows of the hotel. It is needless to say that the biscuits were munched up voraciously.

"The next morning, on looking out of my window, I found my canine friend stationed in the street still gazing at the hotel. Like the small fry of Arab street boys, he had an acute ear for sounds. He had heard the opening of the window, with which he had already made the acquaintance. I called him by his new name of 'Hector,' and he acknowledged it well. From

that time I shared my meals with him. When night came he *mounted guard* over me. His sentry-box, like that of the dogs in India, was a deep hole, scratched by his huge paws in the very bowels of the sandy earth exactly in the middle of the highway opposite to the hotel.

“Hector now never allowed me to walk forth without his strict attendance. My gaunt and grave companion soon made me remarkable at Pera wherever I went. The time was to come when the affection of the faithful animal was to do me good service. One afternoon I had been detained at the British Consulate rather later than usual. The Vice-Consul, with his habitual urbanity, offered his Janissary to accompany me. But my faith in my good Hector’s staunch protection was strong; and I declined the offer with thanks. From my experience of the very first evening of his companionship I knew that he would invariably keep close by my side and allow no mortal soul to approach me. He was worth more to me than a *hundred* consular Janissaries; and, moreover, I knew he was not, as they are sure to be, worshippers of that all powerful idol and ruler of the Ottoman empire, Prince Baksheesh.”

Since the subject now occurs to me, I trust I may be allowed a short digression from the course of my narrative to say a few words relative to the officials attached to the Consulates in the East. According to my own sad experience, coupled with all that I have heard, the consular Dragoman and Janissaries are, I think, one of the *greatest* abuses in the “*red tape system*” which prevails in Turkey and Egypt. Most of the individuals holding these offices, but

especially the former, are generally Levantines and Christians, whose connections are extensive with the merchants and bankers engaged in financial operations with the government of the Porte, and the favourites of his Highness the Viceroy Ismael Pacha. The *spider web* thus woven around foreign diplomacy in these countries is entangling and intricate in the extreme. These complicated meshes leave but *three* ways open to Europeans in dealing with Orientals—to assume a very high tone of command, inasmuch as all ceremonious politeness is a mere farce; to make a *diplomatic* matter of every grievance; or, lastly, to subscribe to the absolute rule of that powerful sovereign of the East, Prince Baksheesh. In the consular Dragoman and Janissary departments it frequently happens that the *father* holds the office of interpreter to the French Consulate, whilst the *sons* are attached in similar manner to the Consulates of England, France, Italy, or Russia. The fathers and brothers of their wives, moreover, are generally employed in the Turkish or Egyptian foreign offices. Every little scrap of available information is thus passed from mouth to mouth; and even the most *private* affairs become the common property of every subordinate in the department. The knowledge thus acquired is, of course, unscrupulously used for the purpose of gathering in “*sis*h” with both hands. The chief alone, good easy soul, is exempt from these practices. He is often more the *deceived* than the deceiving; and, through the all-prevailing influence of Prince Baksheesh, who is the most adroit and consummate trainer of *acute* spies, there is not an official who



does not know every *move* which is being played on the diplomatic chessboard.

These worthies, as is natural, never dare to assume a proper tone with a government to which, in case of the expulsion of a Consul, they, their families, and their relatives, would become subject. To obviate this latter difficulty it would be necessary that *natives* alone of each country should be employed in the respective consulates. A thorough reform, moreover, is required in all the staffs. It seems a strange anomaly in the present century that Consuls-general should be permitted to possess the *absolute* power they at present wield, and to be at once judge and jury in the exercise of their functions. The extraordinary powers with which they are invested, and which, in their practice, are arbitrary in the extreme, require considerable modification, if not *entire* abrogation. In many cases they notably infringe on what we English are so fond of vaunting as "*the liberty of the subject.*" If I am not much mistaken, these diplomatic sovereigns have the power to cause any of their countrymen to be arrested, imprisoned, or banished from the Ottoman dominions, without leaving any redress to the injured party in cases where such functions are oppressively exercised with passion or prejudice. The system is injurious in the highest degree, and leads to most lamentable abuses. It is a notorious fact, also, that whilst "*these eighteen other princes who govern Egypt*" and the Ottoman Empire take their large fees to protect their countrymen, and, like all despotic sovereigns, are never known *to err*, their Dragomans,

“*fellows of exceeding honesty,*” are perpetually pocketing counter-fees to thwart the interests of the protected parties.

These dragomans thus become sovereigns in their turn ; and, with the consciousness of self-importance, they generally contrive to assume the airs befitting their presumed royalty. When the English Ambassador receives the homage of his countrymen, on such occasions as the anniversary of her Majesty’s accession or birthday, or on New Year’s Day, he is seated on a dais in his reception-room, attended by a distinguished court of secretaries, consuls, vice-consuls, legal consuls, judges, and dragomans. But it is the latter who most affect airs of supremacy. In fact, the dragomans may in general be easily distinguished by their haughty bearing and their stately walk. In the streets and public places you may see them, mounted on noble steeds, richly caparisoned *à la Turque*, preceded by their Capi-Oglans marching on foot, with their majestic culpaks sometimes jauntily cocked on one side of the head, and sometimes as jauntily hanging on behind. They, too, like the ambassador, have their *corps personnel*, by which they are seldom surrounded, however, except on their own particular state occasions, such as their birthdays or those of their wives,—their “*ladies,*” as they emphatically call them. These Khanoum Effen-dims are in the habit of giving *soirées*, which are numerous attended by cautious reverencers of their stately lords. Mr. McFarlane, in his “*Turkey,*” has given so accurate a description of these Dragoman *réunions*, that I am tempted to quote the passage.

“I found,” says that author, “madame seated on a sofa at the end of the room, talking with two of her friends. The Dragoman was slip-shodding it about, offering cups of coffee and glasses of sherbet. The visitors entered the room, holding their hats in their hands, and, without looking either to the right or to the left, went, in a hasty manner, to bow their heads before the *Peri* on the sofa. Then followed a number of compliments almost as old as Methusaleh in date, to all of which madame replied most graciously, generally with a most insinuating smile. Her answer was always a most diplomatic one. ‘Sir,’ replied the hostess, ‘you do us too much honour.’ Like many others, I became quite tired of that fulsome ceremony; but I well remember the gracious manner in which that lady uttered the expression, ‘Sir, you are *really* too kind.’ The women were seated on the divans, with their legs tucked up and crossed, like the idols of a pagoda. The men walked up and down the room, twirling their hats about with their fingers. Now and then they sipped a findjan of coffee. When the time came to take their departure, they bowed their heads to the divinity of the sofa and vanished.”

But it is now high time that I should return to my narrative of my faithful *kelb*, which I was relating, as amateur Mohaddetyn, in my turn, to her Highness the *Princesse Epouse*.

“My Hector, as I have said, was proof against bribery. Not even a *kebab*, delicious morsel as he evidently esteemed it, would he touch from any hand but my own. I have seen him refuse such a tit-bit even

from the hand of the kebabdji himself. Generally speaking, in the streets of Stamboul I ran no risk of being molested by any one whom I might meet whilst under my attached Hector's guardianship; for Moslems, as well as *Frenks*, have a perfect horror of those gaunt, savage-looking animals that prowl about in packs. Unfortunately, however, one evening, at a time when my canine friend had lingered for a moment behind, I took a wrong turning. The sun had sunk to rest, and I was extremely anxious to reach my hotel before darkness wholly set in. But, as it was, I found myself benighted, as it were, in that most foul and filthy of all localities in dirty Constantinople—Balata, the Jewish quarter. Were I to live a thousand years I could never obliterate from my memory the hideous, sickening, appalling aspect of that *ghetto* of the Turkish capital. The streets,—if the impure ditches which constituted the passages of the quarter can be dignified by such a name—were filled with a foul, infected mire, the effluvia of which was the concentrated essence of Asiatic cholera. Not only were all the houses miserably poor and dingy, but they were in a condition of such rickety dilapidation, that they were mere ruins in their outer aspect. The overhanging fronts of the ruined habitations, projecting at an angle equal to that of the leaning tower of Pisa, gave me the feeling that they must inevitably fall down and crush me. Enormous cobwebs hung at every aperture in gloomy, dark festoons, dotted here and there by tenanting spiders of the size of walnuts, the black, thick, spindle-legs of which, as they crawled out slowly to view, made my

very frame shudder. In the midst of the dark, dank mass of pestilential mire lay a pack of gaunt, mangy hounds, worn to the appearance of mere skeletons, who gave no other sign of vitality but that of scratching troublesome vermin from their bodies as they lay sprawling in their fetid bed.

“In the gathering gloom of approaching night I must own to having been startled by the savage appearance of these animals ; although not a growl was to be heard, and experience had pretty nearly habituated me to the wild dogs perpetually infesting the public thoroughfares. These beasts, who lie in groups in the middle of roads, are so completely masters of the situation that they refuse to disturb themselves for the convenience of any human passenger. Traversers of the streets are necessitated to step over them as cautiously as they can. To kick them would be dangerous ; not that they ever attack individuals singly, but in packs they have been known to become ferocious. The Moslems never misuse them, but merchant captains, who have ventured to beat them with their sticks, have actually been hunted down by a whole wild herd, and have only escaped from the teeth and fangs of their pursuers by the kindness of worthy Turks who have dragged them into the alcoves of their shops and driven off the enemy with clubs.

“From the hovel windows, many panes of which were stuffed with dirty paper instead of glass, protruded small poles on which hung a medley show of tattered, soiled, and grimy garments. Rags of a filthy nature may be seen in low quarters of our

own vaunted British metropolis, I admit (in Italy, even, the balconies of palaces are festooned with them), but our most squalid inhabitants would have blushed to have exposed such as these to view.

“When I had advanced far already into the midst of this contagious quarter, I stopped in bewilderment and some alarm, without knowing whether to proceed or retrace my steps. As I paused a perfect Babel of tongues arose from every *Yahooodee* (Jew), who stood at his yawning door. ‘May they yet be doomed to eat of the unblest fruit of the *Zaccuim*, that tree of Djehannum, the produce of which is said to be the heads of devils!’”

Fortunately, I may here say, I am a tolerable linguist. Without this advantage it would have been impossible for me to have carried on the commonest daily intercourse either during my residence in the “*Abodes of Bliss*” in which I was destined to be immured, or in the *outer life* of the selamlick. In the former my ears have been generally greeted with Arabic, which may be appropriately termed the vernacular of the Egyptian odalisques. Turkish also has been necessary as the language of the Turkish houris; and in addition to these I have been assailed by such a confusion of African dialects, that it might have puzzled a sphinx to unravel them. But all this was *not* sufficient for my constant requirements. Without some knowledge of French, Italian, German, and modern Greek I should frequently have been as dumbfounded as if the gift of speech had been suddenly taken from me.

“I heard voices around me,” I pursued, in continuance of my story to my illustrious audience, “con-

fusedly exclaiming '*Venez ici, madame,*' or '*Gel! gel! Khanoum Effendem*' ('Come here, lady'), or '*Nehmen Sie sich in Acht,*' '*Badate, Signorina*' ('Take care'). On looking around me I saw a most motley group of hideous looking beings of both sexes, and of all sizes, heights, ages, and degrees of ugliness. There they were peering forth on me out of all the doors and windows of those wretched tottering tenements. Some had their heads covered with huge dirty pads of linen, unworthy of the name of '*turbans,*' others with fezes wound round with dirty strips of muslin. In everyone there was the unmistakable type which proclaims the Jew, and wretched looking objects were they all. I have since learned, however, that many of the squalid men were possessed of millions, their riches being their greatest danger and their curse. Hideous as were the men, the women were far more repulsive objects still. The countenances of some of these filthy, leprous-looking, offensive crones were haggard and ghastly beyond imagination. Their skins were as yellow as saffron, and their large dark eyes seemed as lifeless as pieces of burnt coal. Other spectral creatures were there, with eyes like those of owls, noses near akin to parrots' beaks, curved backs, and heads almost sinking on their skinny breasts. Some, again, were attenuated haridans enveloped in ragged garments, which scarcely seemed to hold to their skeleton forms except by an alliance of dirt. I could but mutter to myself the words of our great poet Shakespeare, whose fame has reached you, no doubt, when speaking of witches, not more terrible of aspect surely than those before me,—

‘Who are these, so wild in their attire; that look not like the inhabitants of earth and yet are on’t!’ Presently I felt that they were moving, approaching, swarming around me, as I stood as if spell bound, in my agony of hesitation. No wonder that I shuddered. I had been already warned of the danger of losing myself in that *sink-hole* of iniquity, the Jewish quarter, where the female population *gloried* in pandering to filthy vice, and made sin and shame in others their own means of living.

“As I stood bewildered, shivering with dread, and not knowing which way to turn, a faint plaintive whining, and a plucking at my dress recalled me to myself. There by my side was my good faithful guide, whom I had forgotten in my alarm. He was evidently beseeching me to come away, and saying as well as a dog could say, ‘Come! come! I know the right direction to the place where you would go.’ Following my poor four-footed dragoman, who bounded forward to show me my way, I retraced my steps, and at last emerged from that vile cesspool of wretchedness and iniquity, blessing my lucky stars that I had such a noble *satir* for my friend and guide. Hector demanded no baksheesh for his services, I well knew, yet my first thought for him was, on arriving at an old *kebabdjî*’s stall, to spend a few paras for the best delicacy I could find to reward my dragoman. Thus it was that my *kismet* threw me a benighted wanderer into that fearful *Balata*—and so it was, *Allah hereem*, I escaped from its hideous labyrinth through the fidelity and tact of a common Constantinople *kelb*!



“When I left the hotel to embark for Alexandria, Hector still escorted me down to the ‘*şcale*’ from which I was to proceed on board the steamer. No viceregal salute from the guns of the Turkish battery did me honour then, as was the case when I had landed on my arrival in the waters of the Bosphorus. My only salute on this occasion was the *howling* of a whole pack of wandering dogs who, as if conscious by instinct of my departure and desirous of showing sympathy with so noble a specimen of their fraternity as my Hector, had accompanied us in procession as we left the hotel for the ‘*şcale*.’ It required all the strength and adroitness of the caikdjis to keep my thronging escort at bay with their oars whilst I embarked. The last sound I heard as I left the shore was a fearful yell of misery from my poor Hector. What became of my faithful four-footed protector I have never known. Had I been going direct to Europe I should indubitably have taken him with me. But such a step was not in my power then. All I could do was to leave a sum of money with the Consul’s Janissary to be handed over to my valued friend Mustapha Ali of Babec, for the maintenance of the poor dog and his interment when he died.”

As I finished my story the venerable Yusuf, who had considerably revived during the latter portion of my narrative, suddenly exclaimed, “*Münnumdr! Münnumdr! Khanoum Effendem.* (“I know! I know! lady”). By a strange chance I know! and, by the beard of the Prophet, your protector made a great sensation in *Eis-tin-polin* (Constantinople) afterwards. If her High-

ness will permit me I will narrate to her 'The *Kismet* of Hector.'

"Soon after the departure of the Austrian Lloyd's steamer, the *Ardea*, which bore you to Alexandria," continued the Kislak Agaci, addressing himself directly to the Cocona, "that venerable Turk, Mustapha Ali, who had often met his Highness the Grand Pacha and yourself, as he told me, in your daily rambles about the heights of Babec, arrived in his caïk at the 'scale' from which you had embarked. Perceiving a large dog lying on the edge of the water, gazing into the distance with mournful eyes, and howling lamentably, he inquired of the caïkji, who owned the boat against which the poor beast lay, now deserted by his sympathising fraternity, what ailed the miserable animal. The honest man promptly informed the Effendi that the *kelb* had been attached to the governess of his Highness the Grand Pacha of Egypt; that she had just sailed for *Iskanderiyeh* (Alexandria), and that the faithful beast was lamenting her loss thus bitterly. A few more questions elicited the information which the caïdji had gained, that a quantity of paras had been left in the hands of one of the Consular Janissaries for the support of the intelligent animal.

"*Korkma, Pek-ahi-dustorum. Janum! Janum! Bashustun*' ('Fear not! It is well, my friend. On my head be it'), said the good Mustapha Ali, 'I will take care of the *kelb*.'

"Thus saying, he gave his slave a white handkerchief which you, Khanoum Effendem, had accidentally left, as he said, in the kiosk in his own garden one day,

when you and his Highness the Grand Pacha had there taken your fruit luncheon. By his directions the slave held this handkerchief to the dog. Hector sniffed at it with a whine of joy. The handkerchief was slipped into the ring of the red morocco collar you had purchased for him, and thus attached Hector submitted to be taken into the Effendi's caïk, and transported to his kiosk at Babec as quiet as a lamb.

"By degrees the poor beast became attached to his new master. The dog's collar was already somewhat worn, and was ornamented, moreover, by a silver bell, which we Moslems, as perhaps you did not know, Khanoum Effendem, look on as the '*Devil's signal*.' So the worthy Mustapha Ali resolved to purchase Master Hector a new one; and having one day occasion to visit Stamboul, he took the animal with him in his caïk. The purchase was immediately made on his landing. This important business being duly transacted, the worthy Turk hastened to call on the Janissary, who having heard from the caidji into whose hands *kismet* had thrown the care of Hector, had sent word to Mustapha Ali to call at his house at Galata in order to take possession of the *kell's* fortune.

"On reaching the Janissary's residence, Mustapha Ali left Hector at the foot of the staircase, and walked up into the counting-house, where he remained some time transacting his business. On descending into the street and looking around, to his surprise and annoyance, he could no more see Hector. In vain he blew his little whistle. In vain he called 'Hector! Hector!' No dog appeared. All at once the thought

crossed the mind of the good-hearted man that the truant might possibly have sought his ancient haunt, the Hotel d'Orient. Off shuffled the charitable Moslem in the direction of the hotel; and there, sure enough, he discovered the faithful animal squatted in the sand, looking up at the windows of the room which his lamented mistress had occupied, and howling piteously.

"Let sceptics say what they may," continued the Mohaddetyn, "no one can dispossess me of the belief that such a peculiar animal as the *kelb* has some method of his own of calculating how the hour-glass of time runs down. I am convinced the noble beast felt, in his searching instinct, that exactly a week had elapsed since the departure of the mistress he had loved, and that, confident in her return, he was expecting that she would hear his whining prayer and once more caress him.

"It was only after a long time, and a considerable degree of coaxing, that Mustapha Ali was enabled to disabuse the poor beast of his impression, and induce him to leave the well-known spot. The worthy Moslem was proceeding with his charge to the shore by a different route from that which he had before taken, when suddenly the dog stopped and whined again as though his heart would break. It was by the stall of an itinerant vendor of kebabs, who was shouting out his wares with the usual volubility of his tribe. On catching sight of Hector, however, the petty merchant suddenly started and exclaimed, '*Behey! Ajaib! Ajaib! Kosh bulduk neoldon. Wallah! Wallah! Mashallah! Mashallah!*' ('What is this? Wonderful

to behold! Wonderful to behold! Well found! What has happened? what? what? Bravo! Bravo!') It was the identical *kebabdji* of whom the Cocona had been accustomed to purchase for Hector his favourite delicacies, and without a word of remuneration he handed to the poor beast his usual morsel.

"'But where is the Cocona?' cried the *kebabdji* looking inquiringly and almost suspiciously into the face of Mustapha Ali, 'and *Minient?*' ('Who art thou?')

"Mustapha Ali related how he had, by a strange coincidence, come into possession of the faithful animal that had been entrusted to his care.

"'Aferino! Aferino! Chok-chay! Divoletin isliat! Allah-il-Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah! Allah mouleyeminin eiléyé agam! Bakalum! Bakalum!'" exclaimed the kind-hearted *kebabdji*, as he resumed his seat on his wooden stool, and with his curiosity satisfied, puffed at his chibouque with his usual imperturbability.

"The good *Son of the Faithful* placed a few paras on the stall of the well-meaning trader, and took his leave. With Hector by his side he again reached his caique in which they both, Effendi and dog, embarked, and returned to Mustapha Ali's pretty kiosk at Babec."

"*Taib! Taib!*" interrupted the Cocona, "I frequently used to visit that delightful spot with his Highness the Grand Pacha. The garden in which the kiosk stood was laid out in the true Oriental style. It was summer-time when we were there, and the air was impregnated with the strong but delicious odour of the roses, myrtles,

jasmins, azaleas, passion-flowers, almond flowers, rose laurels, scarlet pomegranates, and other gorgeously bright blossoms. The well-kept avenues were refreshingly shaded by large bananas, lofty palms, tall cypresses, thick cedars, and *tchinars* (plane-trees), spreading like the banian. Dotted about were gilded aviaries full of birds of the superbest plumage and the liveliest powers of song, and here and there the air was cooled by the clear waters spouted forth from the numerous elegantly sculptured fountains.

“There it was that your Highness,” continued the Cocona, addressing the Grand Pacha, “was wont to ask me the botanical designations of the choice flowers which bloomed around, or rather the names they bore in *Alla Franca*. Your Highness, I am sure, must still remember with pleasure how you loved to seat yourself in the kiosk, on that soft satin cushion, which the amiable Mustapha Ali, who had watched your movements on the occasion of your first visit to his terrestrial *Corkam*, had caused to be placed there for your accommodation. You remember, too, doubtless, the *last* time we visited the lovely spot. It was just before your illness. On that occasion you found placed—beside another cushion—baskets of sweatmeats and strawberries, and porcelain cups, full of iced sherbet. I can recollect, at all events, how, at the sight of these good things, you ran up to me, exclaiming, ‘Oh, madame, do not laugh at me; but come and see how prettily my *gin* (spirits or fairies) have laid out luncheon for us in the kiosk,’ and how you kindly added then, ‘And see! I have placed all the chocolate buttons out

of the sweatmeat basket on a plate apart for you, because I know you like them so much.”

“*Evvet, evvet!*” cried the little Prince, clapping his hands. “And I sent good Mustapha Ali a gold watch and chain as his baksheesh.”

“I approach the end of Hector’s story,” pursued the Mohaddetyn, after this little digression. “On his return to Babec the poor dog was listless and uneasy. He was evidently pining woefully. The next day he lay prostrate, looking at his new master with lacklustre eye. All on a sudden he uttered a low whine—then came a gasp. Hector was dead! The return to his favourite haunts, and the recollection thus painfully renewed of his kind mistress had doubtless been too much for that pattern of affection and fidelity. He had died of a broken heart.

“Poor Hector’s sorrowing master had learned by tradition how the Sultan Soloman I. had interred with reverence the valued dog of his beautiful Roxalana, and he resolved to follow the example. Hector was buried beneath a bed of violets in the lovely gardens in which his Highness the Grand Pacha, and you Madame, so much loved to wander. Then his late master invited his intimate friends to a funeral breakfast, as a *fantasia*, and in solemn, earnest terms eulogised the good qualities of the faithful dog. The next morning, some of the neighbours, who were ill-disposed to the worthy Mustapha Ali, went to the Cadi of the village to give their own version of the ceremony which had taken place. They declared that the dead hound had received a burial such as would have been

bestowed on a *true believer*, and even went so far as to dare to affirm that they themselves had assisted at the celebration of the funeral rites, and witnessed the blasphemous ceremonies which had taken place. The Cadi, without further inquiry, chose to believe these fellows, to whom 'lying was as meat and drink and the roof that covered them,' and desired that the culprit should be immediately brought before him. At the appearance of Mustapha Ali, the Cadi inquired in a severe and authoritative tone whether he was one of those vile *káfirs* (infidels) who worshipped dogs, inasmuch as he had interred the carcass of his *kelb* with all the rites due alone to *Sons of the Faithful*, and had pronounced a funeral oration over his grave.

"Mustapha made his *temená* to the Cadi, and replied coolly and tranquilly, 'Most venerable Cadi, you are doubtless ignorant that my deceased dog possessed a fortune of his own, of which, at his demise, I was to become the inheritor under certain conditions.'

"At these words, the members of his court looked at each other in amazement, and exclaimed, '*Janum! Janum! Ajaib! Ajaib! Mustárréb bir chey dir!*' ('That is a strange affair!')

"'Yes,' continued the worthy Mustapha Ali, well knowing the *potent* influence of Baksheesh in the land he dwelt in; 'and one of the conditional bequests was a legacy of six thousand piastres to your worship. I have brought them with me here.' Thus saying, he held up four purses in his hands.

"The eyes of the Cadi glistened at the sight of the *baksheesh*. Assuming a very serious air, he turned



to the assembled multitude, and exclaimed in a tone of severity, 'Look, now, how good men may be slandered, and what malice has been exercised towards this worthy, charitable Moslem. Come, Mustapha Ali,' he pursued, addressing the accused, 'since you offered up *no* prayers for the soul of the departed, methinks it were better we should immediately do so. Come, let us retire to our devotions.' Then, counting his *comboloi* (rosary) devoutly, the *upright* and honourable Cadi (judge) ordered the court to be cleared, and with the four purses, destined to swell the contents of his strong box, retired to his *selamlick* in company with poor Hector's master. What ceremonies were performed in the penetralia of the Cadi's *sanctum sanctorum*, and whether, as the ragged urchins of Constantinople to this hour declare, prayers were *really* offered up to the Prophet for the repose of the *kelb*, it is impossible to say."

Here the venerable Yusuf paused. The Grand Pacha, who was generally most merrily disposed, laughed heartily at the clever manner in which his good friend, Mustapha Ali, had cajoled the Cadi, and turned the tables on his enemies. He immediately gave orders to Fieka for a pair of gold spurs to be sent to him by the next steamer from France as baksheesh for his kindness to the Cocona's *satir*.

Her Highness the *Princesse Epouse*, who had listened most attentively, exclaimed, "*Mashallah! Mashallah!*" and clapped her hands. Two slaves entered at this signal, one of whom bore a tray, on which were laid two purses of paras. These she directed to be placed

before the Grand Pacha, who ordered Feika to hand them to the amiable Yusuf. On the gold salver, carried by the other slave, lay a pink silk kerchief richly embroidered. This kerchief Feika, who was standing by Yusuf's side, removed, and displayed two handsome *yatagans* (large daggers), the handles of which were thickly studded with precious stones. These were the baksheesh of the *Princesse Epouse* herself. At this presentation, the kind-hearted Abyssinian rose from the divan, prostrated himself at the feet of her Highness, and touched with his lips the skirt of her robe. Then he arose, promised, at the request of the Grand Pacha, to resume his narrative at an earlier hour the next evening, made his *temena*, and retired.

On the conclusion of the usual ceremonies observed on preparing the little Prince for his couch, which I have already so minutely detailed in "Harem Life in Egypt," the *Princesse Epouse* retired, accompanied by her suite, and his Highness the Grand Pacha Ibrahim slept "*the happy sleep of childhood.*"

## CHAPTER V.

EARLY the next evening, as the hands of the Turkish timepiece, standing on the ormolu table facing the divan, on which his Highness the Grand Pacha was seated, pointed to eleven o'clock (or six P.M. according to European time), the Cocona, in obedience to the little Prince's commands, clapped her hands, and a whole train of slaves entered to serve up supper.

The *carte* comprised soup, which his Highness *never* tasted; mutton cut into small pieces, and stewed with cucumbers, gourds, cabbages, and a variety of other vegetables, the true Arab stew; minced meat, highly seasoned with salt and mixed with rice, raisins, onions, and other ingredients, served in white and black egg plants, scooped out for the purpose; roasted fowls and turkeys, stuffed with pistachio nuts, bread-crumbs, parsley, and onions, again highly seasoned with salt, although *pepper* was totally eschewed; and, lastly, various kinds of pastry, conspicuous among which were pancakes, swimming in honey and clarified butter, "a most dainty dish to set before" a young Prince!

As soon as the repast was finished, coffee was served to the Cocona, who alone partook of it, as the little Prince drank only pure water or sherbet.

Scarcely had the *zarfs* been removed, when their

Highnesses the First Wife, or "Lady Paramount," and the Third Wife of the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, entered the reception-room. The Grand Pacha and the Cocona rose immediately on seeing the illustrious ladies, and stood, until her Highness the Lady Paramount graciously made a sign to them to *otour*. Cigarettes were then served, the cry of *Bir-Atech!* ("Fire!—a light!") was sent forth, and four little slaves went round to supply the desired requirement in the usual manner. The fame of the Grand Pacha's evenings with the Mohaddetyn had evidently been spread about through the whole harem. The company was more numerous than ever, and formed a most motley group. The ladies of the harem of the two new viceregal visitors were also in attendance now; they were soon all squatted on elegant damask cushions, placed on the Brussels carpet. The Muezzin's call had already ceased clanging, when, punctual to his appointment, the Kislar Agaci entered the apartment, and saluted with reverence the august company. The Princess Paramount bade him *otour* on the divan opposite to their Highnesses. Then, amidst the general incense of the cigarettes of the whole party, he once again resumed his narrative of his "Reminiscences of Active Service."

"Hundreds of relatives of the departing Hadjis accompanied them on their way as far as the station of the Cairo and Suez Railway, dispersing only as the trains started. The bustle and confusion at this moment was harassing in the extreme. The noise of the crying, the lamentation, the shouting and the shrieking, filled the air with deafening sounds. For myself, I felt

overjoyed when the shrill squeak of the railway guard's whistle announced the departure of the over-crowded waggons. The accommodation afforded to the pilgrims was meagre, *insufficient*, wretched; they were stowed away in trucks like cattle in pens.

“Your Highnesses will, I trust, pardon my digressing for a while from my narrative. I cannot allow this opportunity to pass without relating to you the knowledge I have gained, when on active service, relative to the manner in which railways are managed in this country.

“I must confess that when I last took my ticket at the railway station of Alexandria my mind was very far from being at peace within me. The station itself was situated in a densely populated locality, where the cholera had lately committed *fearful* ravages among the Arabs. I heard, too, on all sides, stories of the innumerable accidents which had lately taken place. In truth, it is *patent* to the whole of the travelling community in Egypt that the railways from Alexandria to Cairo, and from Cairo to Suez, are in a most shameful, and, I may say, *dangerous* state of disorganisation. The engineers themselves consider that they daily risk their lives; and many and many a time has a train been saved from being run into solely by the adroitness and skill of English drivers and stokers. Danger constantly arises from the fact that the signal lights behind the trains are systematically neglected,—danger also from those unnecessary stoppages at very insignificant stations, which are continually placing hundreds of lives in jeopardy.

“ The management of the Alexandria and Cairo line was invested, at the time of which I speak, in the hands of a council, whose want of unanimity fully typified that confusion in the multitude of councillors so much to be deprecated. Complaints, too, were everywhere to be heard of the excessive corruption of all the subaltern officials, over whom no kind of restraint was ever exercised. The friends and acquaintances of these men scarcely ever thought it necessary to provide themselves with tickets; all that was considered obligatory on them was the handing a trifling *backsheesh* to the officials at both termini. It was well known that many individuals, notables at Cairo and Alexandria, were in the habit of travelling on this very economical system in first-class carriages without paying a *para* for their fare; whilst, by a similar arrangement, low, offensive people were able to thrust themselves perpetually into the same carriages, to the excessive annoyance of respectable travellers. The officials, in fact, had learned to decline the verb ‘*to take backsheesh,*’ in every person, mood, and tense, with marvellous aptitude, and paraded their knowledge without the least reserve.

“ Upwards of sixteen collisions had been known to take place in one month; and, in one of these catastrophes, two of the splendid despatch engines of his Highness the Viceroy had been partially destroyed. On another occasion, when two goods trains came into collision near Tantah, the legs of a Berberine were cut off, and five other natives were most seriously injured.

“ One day, when business had taken me to the Cairo station, I found the platform crowded from one end to

the other with Hadjis and their baggage. I asked them how long they had been there. 'Three days,' was the answer of the most: one told me he had been there for *ten*. Yes, your Highnesses, for ten whole days had that unfortunate lived on the platform of that station—slept under its roof. You will scarcely believe another instance of mismanagement and neglect, which must appear almost incredible, I own; but it is a positive fact, for which I can vouch by my soul of truth. On the occasion to which I refer almost as many pilgrims as the numerous herd whose departure I have described at the time I myself made the pilgrimage with her Highness the Princess Fatimah, were stowed in the waggons for Suez, like so many sheep into a cattle train. The train was then shunted off, to allow that which was arriving from Alexandria to come up. It was then drawn back into a middle line of rails; and there it was left absolutely unheeded—*forgotten*, it was said, until the end of a week. How this could have happened Allah alone can tell. It is not easy to forget, when once it has been heard, the uproar made by the thronging Hadjis when waiting at the office where their passports are procured, prior to their departure for Mekkah; and, from the confusion of tongues which then takes place, it is difficult to understand how they should have so quietly submitted to their detention without a fearful tumult. It may have been the consciousness that they had no remedy in their hands which may have induced them to submit to be thus jammed up in waggons for such a time amidst sufferings and suspense of mind which can have been little

less than the most horrible torture. A report has also been made to me of another pilgrim train having been detained for five days.

“It is no unusual occurrence, I can assure your Highnesses, for passenger trains to be *thirteen* hours in going from Suez to Cairo, or from Cairo to Alexandria. It is an undeniable fact, that goods are frequently stolen, others are thrown aside, and merchants are thus frequently unable to obtain any information as to the whereabouts of their merchandise. Accidents are of daily occurrence, and many are the poor creatures who are run over, unheeded, and their fate unknown. The fault lies generally, I admit, in the incompetence of our Arab drivers, although, it must be said, that engines have been known to run off the lines, when the drivers were certainly *not* of Arab race. Not long since, at Cairo, a Bedouin lay asleep on the line, close by the railway station; no heed was taken of him, and his legs were severed close to his trunk. The poor wretch died, and his Highness the Viceroy, *Allah were umeler Effendimiz!* (‘May he live a thousand years!’) on being informed of the sad facts, with that goodness of heart, for which, as your Highnesses well know, he is so eminently distinguished, sent twelve hundred and fifty francs to the lamenting family. One night an English driver of the train from Cairo to Alexandria prevented a collision by stopping his engine, and then walking along the line in advance with lamps, as fog signals, and thus bringing the coming train to a stand still. His bravery, I am sorry to say, was never rewarded with any baksheesh. On another occasion, one of the



despatch engines of his Highness, whilst conveying the Indian mails, and several chests of precious treasure, ran into a goods' train near Tantah, and smashing the break-van, passed over it and mounted on one of the trucks. No lives were lost, but the mails were detained for very many hours. Whole trucks of cotton have been burned during transit, by carelessness, and the lines blocked up by the results of the fires. But I could occupy long hours in detailing the numerous accidents and collisions which have taken place in latter years.

“Your Highnesses must know, that a great portion of these fearful catastrophes must be ascribed to the wretched state of the material in use. Even to this day, the locomotives are continually out of repair, and frequently start from the different termini in a condition utterly unfit for the performance of the journey. It is patent to the whole of the European engineer staff, belonging to the Alexandria and Cairo line, that no less than eighteen locomotives are now disabled, for want of necessary repairs, and that the most ordinary supply of fuel is continually wanting. Yet, in spite of this state of utter disorganisation, in spite of the facts that, as long as incompetent Arab drivers are allowed to be employed by Egyptian and Turkish directors, individuals who do not court death, can scarcely trust their bodies to the railways—in spite of all, I must inform your Highnesses that the railway rates have ever been augmented by the Egyptian government. In addition to these grievances, numerous and serious complaints

are constantly being made to the administration, relative to the continual delay in the transit of merchandise.”

“*Taiib! Taiib!*” interrupted the little Prince suddenly, “I remember that my poor Cocona has been, more than once, obliged to content herself with Arab bread, because both Cairo and Suez were without flour, owing to the delay of those vilely managed railways.”

The Cocona smiled, and Yusuf continued his strictures on the state of the Egyptian railway administration.

“In many instances the trains to Alexandria have been delayed an absurd and unconscionable time, owing to the bad water supplied to the engines at the Damanhour station; and the driver before reaching Kafr-Dawar, has been obliged to leave his train and run some little distance on the line, in order to procure fresher water. In fact, the current of the water, which supplies the Damanhour reservoir is open to the public, for the general *washing* of their clothes, and other ablutionary purposes. The soap, in amalgamating with the water causes the boilers to prime, and, although this circumstance has been laid before the proper officials, no stoppage has, as yet, been put to this evil.

“One more fact, connected with the evils of the present administration of the railways, and I will pause, from fear of wearying your Highnesses with my remarks. Not long ago, the chief of the Alexandria Divan, regardless of the usual transit, and the dangers so heedlessly incurred, ordered a pilot engine to be sent off to fetch up some cotton trucks, which were said to belong to his Highness the Viceroy, or, at all events, to some

of the favoured few among the clique that surrounds the Court, without ever thinking to inform the goods manager in charge of his design."

But although our Mohaddetyyn thus paused in his remarks, I would fain interrupt once more the course of this narrative to offer here some of my own on the same subject.

It is a well-known fact, that the Arab engine-drivers, to whom allusion was more than once made in the Kislar Agaci's observations, are only Arab stokers, who are taken out of the Nile steamers, and who, after *six* weeks' instruction, are granted certificates as engine-drivers. These diplomas they obtain from the Superintendent of the Locomotive Department, who receives £100 capitation fee from the Egyptian government. No less than seventy of these men have been lately drafted into the Egyptian railway-service, and by this transaction that official has pocketed, in round numbers, some seven thousand pounds, besides being elevated to the rank of a Bey of the second class—a position equivalent to that of Post Captain in England. Until English drivers are substituted for these utterly incompetent and reckless Arabs, lives will still be unsafe on the lines, and property will ever continue to be damaged or destroyed, as a matter of daily occurrence.

In many other respects the mal-administration of the Egyptian railways has, for some time past, been the current topic of general conversation. The British merchants declare that, under the intolerable and scandalous system of *backsheesh*, they are obliged either to be fearfully mulcted, or their goods remain

unsent. At the same time, it is universally known, that, whilst the public is being thus imposed on, the government is pillaged of its dues.

The railway administration, meanwhile, has almost invariably refused all compensation to the owners of packages which have been stolen, lost, or damaged. When delay of an almost interminable length has occurred, and merchants have sent to inquire of the Transit Administration how soon they might expect their goods to be forwarded, they have generally received as reply the excuse that a large amount of machinery, or other material, *belonging* to his Highness the Viceroy, had to be sent off, and that until this commission had been executed not a single case belonging to any one else could be forwarded.

Some little time ago the British merchants lost all patience, and, finding redress denied them, convened a public meeting at the British Institute at Alexandria. Out of twenty-five English firms *twenty-one* of the principals attended. The whole abuses of the system were then fairly and ably expounded by the chairman, and measures were discussed for the purpose of remedying, if possible, a state of intolerable evil which rendered the whole administration of the railways a mere vile and hampering monopoly. Without pretending to give a summary of what passed on this occasion, I may still refer to several of the topics then discussed.

The subject relates to a state of things exposed in the *Times of India*—the singular struggle perpetually going on between his Highness the Viceroy and his "*favoured few*" on the one side, and the general mer-

cantile body on the other. It is quite evident that his Highness cannot be personally aware of the mischief practised in his name, although he certainly has profited by it, and still does so profit to a very great extent. Every step of the Egyptian government since that Prince's accession to the viceroyalty has been steadily directed towards obtaining for his Highness, and his partners, if so they may be called, or rather the clique which surrounds him, the *lion's* share in all the commerce of Egypt, if not its exclusive possession. In fact, the Viceroy is made by the *unpopularity* of the oppressive acts committed by his servants, to appear as if he were anxious to be thought, not so much the Ruler of Egypt as the *first trader* in the land; ay, and in the universe, too. Such would certainly seem to be the ambition of some of the Egyptian princes, if there is any correctness in a statement which appeared in the columns of the *Egyptian Times*. The extract to which I allude appeared as follows, under the heading of "Documents Found":—

"One is an invoice in French describing a cargo of cotton, sent to Marseilles in the Egyptian steam frigate *Ibrahimic*, Captain Mustapha Bey, and consigned to a merchant there, whose name I cannot make out, but the first letter looks like S. The owner of the cotton, however, seems to be nothing less than a prince, for he is styled 'Son Altesse I—Pacha;' but the name is just as illegible as that of the Marseilles correspondent, the initial 'I' being the only letter I have been able to decipher, unless perhaps the final one, which is rather like an 'L.' Surely it must be a *hoax*, for I cannot

imagine that any Egyptian prince would be allowed to employ a man-of-war for the purpose of transporting cotton to France, thus giving such prince, or princes, an undue advantage over other merchants, who have so many difficulties to contend with during the cotton season in the transport of their merchandise from the interior to Alexandria, and in the shipment of the same. Now the question is, who is this Egyptian prince who acts the merchant and banker, and who has at his disposal steam frigates, commissioned captains, and sailors, paid by the Egyptian government, and loads them with cotton, whilst the cotton of other merchants, less favoured, lies *rotting* for months and months at the different railway stations in Egypt, for want of trucks to bring it down to the port of shipment?

“ Another letter was found, in which that individual who aspired to be styled the Prince of Merchant Princes found fault with his Marseilles agent for not obtaining a higher price for his cotton, and hinted that he would *not* accept the order enclosed him for the net proceeds, as it must be on another bank, the Prince having an interest in that to which the order was addressed. In short, that banking establishment, as well as three others, had been established by himself; and as he needed *paras*, he must have hard cash.

“ What kind of reception, I wonder, would an Egyptian prince who knows how to drive as hard a bargain as any one on 'change, and who allows his name to appear on a bill of lading, meet with among European princes? Of course they would treat him with no more consideration than they would a London or Liver-

pool broker or banker, though his private fortune might be from two to three millions of pounds sterling per annum, chiefly realised by the sale of the cotton produced on his extensive estates."

But to return to my own remarks. Before the lines from Alexandria to Cairo, and from Cairo to Suez, can be placed in anything like good order, a double line of rails is absolutely necessary. A number of engines also must be added, the stations considerably enlarged, especially that at Birket-el-Sabt, and English drivers substituted for Arabs. I may here remark at the same time, that his Highness Abbas Pacha, my lamented master, had *great* difficulties to encounter in the construction of these lines. He was stopped in his efforts by French intrigues, on the plea that he had no firman. For this, then, he was obliged to apply to the Sublime Porte; and through the influence of the British Ambassador it was readily granted. Eventually, however, it unfortunately became the property of the Egyptian government.

No effectual reforms, it is clear, can be effected until the Egyptian government places the control of this important department of the public service in competent hands, with free and full power to make whatever modifications may be necessary, and until a European, not a Turk or Maltese Mussulman, be appointed sole director. His Highness the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, need be under no difficulties in his choice of individuals. He has in his service two most competent Englishmen, who have had upwards of twenty years' experience in the working of railways in Europe, but who, at the

present moment, are placed in positions subordinate to Turks, who know little or nothing of such matters. I allude to Messrs. Charles and George Betts, whose important services to the Egyptian government were, until lately, wholly overlooked. It was only on the resignation of the latter, that the rank of Bey, or Colonel, with an income of £600 a year, when employed, was conferred on him by his Highness the Viceroy, as an inducement to him to remain in the Egyptian service; whilst, at the same time, two hundred *feddans* (acres) of land were presented to the former. I am at a loss to comprehend where lies the difficulty which can prevent these talented men from being employed in such a field of usefulness. The appointment of either, or both, of them to the head directorship would be hailed with satisfaction by the whole mercantile community of Alexandria, save his Highness infinite annoyance, spare the finances of the Egyptian government, and yield it a much more lucrative revenue than this department has hitherto done; while, at the same time, it would relieve their Excellencies, Raghîb Pacha, and Cherif Pacha, from all the troubles under which they at present labour. Such an appointment would give incalculable facilities to the general as well as the mercantile public, especially if the railway administration would consent to become the general carriers and deliverers of merchandise, as is the case in Europe, at a fair remunerative tariff. The outlay in the expenditure of large waggons and Flemish horses, or in the engagement of a staff of drivers, porters, and other necessary servants, especially if contracted for in



Europe, would not be very great, whilst the returns for such an expenditure would be *immense*, and the accommodation to traders invaluable.

“After witnessing, with sadly-sympathising heart, the departure of the pilgrims by that over-crowded train,” pursued the Mohaddetyn, whose narrative I have, perhaps, too long interrupted by my own reflections, “and superintending the placing the *Machmal* and the baggage of her Highness the Princess Validé on the railway trucks, I returned to the *Mansion of Bliss* in the Citadel, in order to receive the instructions of her Highness for the arrangement of her own departure on the morning of the following Friday. The Friday, you already know, perhaps, Khanoum Effendem,” he added, again addressing the Cocona, “was the day on which the Prophet Mahomet was conceived; and it is thus regarded as the Turkish Sabbath.

“After having been honoured with the commands of her Highness, I descended into the eunuchs’ hall. In passing through into my own reception-room, I found several *arkadash* awaiting me. They had come to make to me their *Hochgâ kalen* (adieu). As soon as I had returned their greeting, I clapped my hands, and caused the slaves to serve us with the customary refreshments. I prided myself greatly on my sweetmeats; and, along with the usual coloured sugar-almond and some excellent conserves of roses and pistachio-nuts, I had a choice store of red and white crystals of *Rahatlakoun*. On these I laid some value, as, I admit, our fraternity are as great gourmands with regard to sweet things as the Arabs and Turks in

general. Cigarettes were smoked during the discussion of the little matters, and the evening passed pleasantly away.

“When Selim, the Kislár Agací of his Highness the Viceroy Abbas Pacha, had finished his chibouque, he turned to me with solemnity, and said, ‘*Allah es mar-ladek. Gáne guennuldén sizé tébrik idèrim. Az vaketdén yiné zati chérifnize gueurmek méémoul iderim, Allah affiet!*’ (‘May God have you in his keeping! I congratulate you most sincerely! I hope that I shall see you soon again. May Allah cause thee pleasure!’) To this farewell salutation the whole assembly of my guests responded, ‘*Allah-il-Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah! Amin! Amin!*’

“‘*Vaket guég dir*’ (‘It is getting late’), said the Kislár Agací of the *Princesse Epouse*. ‘*Ferkrimé bir chey guelidi.*’ (‘An idea has just struck me.’) ‘Suppose we accompany you to-morrow to take a farewell look at Cairo by *daylight*, and mingle for a short time in the outer life of the Cairenes. A perambulation about our picturesque and striking city, the *Umm-ed-Dunya* (Mother of the World), as it is called, will be a fitting salaam to it before you leave it; and, as a due preface to this act, perhaps you will permit me to relate to you the legend of the great city’s foundation, as detailed by an Afrang writer.

“‘It happened in the year 358 of the Hegira, that Abou Tummin El Moéz, the first sovereign of the Fowátem dynasty, sent his renowned general, Goher-el-Kaid, to invade Egypt. The feat was accomplished. So he summoned a council of all the astrologers—those

erudite philosophers who tell us, when we are sick in fortune from a surfeit of our own evil works, that the sun, moon, and stars are alone guilty of our misdeeds and our disasters—in order to consult them as to the propitious hour when the foundation-stone of the new city should be laid. These sages decreed that several bells should be suspended on cords, which were to be fixed on poles along the whole circuit of the intended limits of the city. The choice of these *devils'* signals was in itself an unlucky one at starting; for has not the Prophet anathematised all bells and gongs as peculiar to the devotions of the Giaours? But so it was; and it was ordained, moreover, by the astrologers, that the bells should be rung at a particular moment, selected by themselves, as a signal for the laying of the first stone. Unluckily, the arrangements were made one night when the planet Mars, *El Káhir* (the Victorious), considered to be a most unpropitious star, was in the ascendant. By an untoward stroke of fate, a *ghorab* (crow) chanced to alight on one of the cords, and set the bells ringing before the time which the astrologers had chosen. At this sound, the bricklayers and masons immediately set to work on the construction of the first wall; and thus was the city founded under an un auspicious influence. Allah avert the omen!

“‘*Mashallah! Mashallah! Aferino! Aferino!*’ exclaimed all my guests at the conclusion of the Kislár Agaci’s legendary story, and rose to take their departure. The Kislár Agaci then likewise took his leave of me, after giving the promise that the whole party

should assemble at my quarters the next morning, in order that we might sally forth together and ramble about the Egyptian capital.

“About an hour after I had finished my breakfast the next day, and just as I was enjoying my *kef*, my subordinates entered to inform me that the expected party of *arkadash* were assembled on horseback in the court-yard. Quitting the reception-hall, I hastened to the mounting-stone, and jumped on my richly-caparisoned barb, armed only with my badge of office, the whip.

“After a cordial greeting, we all quitted the citadel and rode to the Bab el Zooaylah, where we alighted. Here we gave orders to our *sais* to return with our horses to the palace stables. Making our starting-point from the place where our criminals are executed, and which the Frenks term, I know not why, the ‘*Tyburn*’ of Cairo, we entered the Ghoreh Bazaar. Here we cast a hasty glance at the gorgeously-patterned cotton fabrics, the rich stuffs, the elegant brocaded silks, the tarbooshes, and other costly objects of merchandise, which were exposed for sale in the alcoves around. Then we passed on through stirring scenes of bustle and turmoil, amidst crowds of slowly-traversing horsemen, and women sitting astride on high donkeys, which, by the way, the French so facetiously term *fiacres du pays*, attended by donkey-boys and eunuchs. Sometimes came a whole train of ladies from some harem belonging to a rich grandee; and, in this case, the retinue of attendant female slaves and eunuchs was considerable. Hosts of

Khanoums, too, were waddling about in their tobas and habarabs, the unmarried women swathed in white, like spirits of the dead, and all wearing burkos over their faces. All these females were bent on visiting the shops, or at all events made purchases their pretext. Yes, Khanoum Effendem," pursued Yusuf, again addressing the Cocona individually for her private instruction, "our females have as great a fondness for this species of employment as your Alla Franca Khanoums, although none of the sex ever become shop-women as with you. Still, I admit, some may, in a measure, be called '*traders*.' In their leisure hours in the harems they will embroider handkerchiefs, head-veils, and such gear, on *mesej* (frames), with gold and silver threads or coloured silks. These articles they entrust to eunuchs, who employ *dellálines* (female hawkers) to dispose of them in the bazaars or in other harems. All females, of whatever degree, thus perambulating bazaars and public places, I ought to tell you, Khanoum Effendem, expect when accosted to be saluted by the title 'Lady;' or, if supposed to be going on the pilgrimage, to be addressed, '*Oh, female pilgrim!*' Any individual who might, through inadvertency, use the expression, '*Y'al mara!*' ('Oh, woman!') would indubitably receive at once the severe response, '*May Allah cut out thy heart!*'

"In the bazaars the number of blind persons is always a remarkable feature. Some contrive to grope about alone; others are led about by little Arab urchins, as cunning as those favourite imps of the *Ingleez sorvahn* (English traveller), the donkey boys. Your Highnesses must not imagine, however, that all the hundreds of

blind people who may be seen perambulating the streets of Cairo and Alexandria owe their partial or total loss of sight to that fearful disease ophthalmia. Many parents have been known to blind their children by pouring the juice of the silk plant into their eyes, in order to prevent their being drawn as conscripts, many of the lower classes of our Egyptian population having an intense horror of being sent on foreign service, even if it be *only* into Turkey."

A few of my own observations on the subject of the topics here mentioned by the good Yusuf may not perhaps be considered out of place. Ophthalmia is caused principally by the minute particles of damp sand or dust which the wind blows into the eyes; although sometimes only by the mere glare of the sun, or by a draught of air. It is most prevalent during the inundation of the Nile, when exposure to the damp atmosphere becomes highly prejudicial. But if the Egyptians would strictly adhere to the ablutions which their religion enjoins them to perform, and wash their eyes with tepid water or milk on returning to their homes, not one half of them, I should say, would fall victims to the sad affliction.

Another topic to which the Kislär Agaci referred is one of a most delicate nature. I allude to the use of the juice of the silk plant, which he mentioned as employed for the blinding of children. It is well known also that the same drug is turned to the purpose of procuring abortion in the interior of many a harem. This atrocious crime, which is simply infanticide in another form, is looked upon, apparently, as no sin by

Eastern ladies. In their "*Mansions of Bliss*," after once or twice bearing children, they conceive a horror of the natural duties of maternity, more especially if their offspring have been of the female sex. The destruction of the unborn babe is thus no more to them than the act of a woman weary of a mother's delight. Very seldom, I may say, at the same time do they possess, or even comprehend, the feelings natural to European parents. I have known even princesses, when their sons were almost at the point of death, leave them to the care of Abyssinian nurses for a whole week without once visiting the sufferers.

"We soon reached the Mosque of El Ghoree. Leaving our overshoes at the portal of the entrance, we passed into that grand and imposing edifice, and duly performed our devotions. This duty completed, we looked at the tomb of the founder, who lost his life in the battle of Aleppo (1517) against the Turks. It was by this event that the Abbasside Khalifat was extinguished, and Mekkah and Medina subjected to the Turk, and then it was that the Sultan assumed his spiritual supremacy, and adopted the titles of '*The Deity of Islam*' and '*The Commander of the Faithful*.'

'As we were on the point of quitting the Mosque I beheld a young Imam squatted on his *segâdeh* (prayer-carpet) in one of the corners, evidently deeply absorbed in the perusal of a book. I saw by its size and form that it was not the Koran, and my curiosity was aroused to know the nature of the work which he studied with so much profound attention. I approached him unnoticed behind the pillar against which he was leaning,

and, looking over his shoulder, I caught sight of an Arabic version of ‘*The Unrivalled House of God*,’ one of the most striking passages of which had evidently riveted all his powers of thought.”

The passage to which the worthy Mohaddetyn referred, and which he now cited, has been thus translated by Alger :—

“The holy Nanac on the ground, one day,  
Reclining, with his feet towards Mecca, lay.  
A passing Moslem priest, offended, saw,  
And flaming for the honour of his law,  
Exclaimed, ‘Base Infidel! thy prayers repeat!  
Towards Allah’s house how dar’st thou turn thy feet?’  
Before the Moslem’s shallow accents died,  
The pious but indignant Nanac cried,  
‘And turn then, if thou can’st, towards any spot,  
Wherein the awful house of God is *not*!’”

“Having gratified my wish,” continued the Mohaddetyn, “I rejoined my companions in the courtyard of the Mosque. It was full of beggars, to whom we threw a handful of paras. Then we passed along the *shâré* (large thoroughfare), in which we found our way impeded by two camels, which, loaded with goatskins filled with water, stopped up the entire traffic, and created the greatest inconvenience and confusion. As soon as we were able to continue our progress we entered the *darb* (by-street), the wooden door of which was open, although it is invariably closed at night, and thus reached the bazaar of Khan-el-Khaleelee.

“This bazaar is situated on the site of the tombs of the Memlook kings, so often erroneously termed the ‘Tombs of the Caliphs.’ These monuments were all destroyed except that of E’Saleh Eiyooob, the contem-



porary of that king, Louis of France, called '*St. Louis*' by the Frenks, who attacked Cairo without success (1249), and the bones were thrown on the mounds of rubbish outside the city. Your illustrious grandfather, Ibrahim Pacha, however, had these relics removed, my Prince, and caused umbrageous trees to be planted on the place of their re-interment. The spot has since become the favourite resort of the Cairenes and their families. It stands in the centre of that portion of the capital which constituted the original city, and now forms an oblong court surrounded by alcoved shops.

"The bazaar is now the principal one of El-Kahir. In it are exposed for sale miscellaneous articles of very various kinds and descriptions, consisting chiefly of rich carpets, fine cloths, ironmongery, segadehs, chibouques, and shawls, and wearing apparel of such heterogeneous costumes as was never dreamed of in any Alla Franca establishment. Our attention was particularly directed to the remarkably fine display of warlike implements in finely-tempered Damascus scimitars, and keen-edged khangars, most of which are richly encrusted with diamonds and other precious stones.

"I took the opportunity to purchase several yatagans for my subordinates to take with them to El Hejaz, and whilst I was thus engaged in bargaining with the armourer, some of my companions were sauntering to other shops to look at the rich silks and elegant gold and silver articles; and others found their attention attracted by a wretched-looking mendicant reciter of tales and poetry who had drawn a crowd around him. In

truth he so ably recounted the famous Arabic story of the '*Beggar's Revenge*' that I felt induced to drop a few piastres in his hand, whilst my companions threw such a very shower of *paras* that a swarm of vagrants were soon scrambling among themselves for the possession of the stray coin. This story, unknown perhaps to your Highnesses, although popular among the lower classes, tells how a beggar hid in his bosom a stone which had been flung at him by the favourite of a caliph, with the resolve to bide his opportunity for revenge on his assaulter; but when he, not long afterwards, met his enemy the favourite, riding on a wretched donkey, disgraced and degraded, threw the missile from him, saying, 'Tis madness to attack your foe when powerful; 'tis meanness to strike him when fallen low.'

"The sight of the motley groups which throng this bazaar to suffocation is one, probably, not familiar to your Highnesses, and I would fain give you some faint idea of its confused variety. Now, all progress is impeded by the *dellalins* (auctioneers) who carry the goods they have to sell by auction up and down the numerous lanes of the bazaar, vociferating with stentorian lungs the *temmen* (price) offered by real or imaginary bidders, and monopolising the clear space kept for them by the *Carasses*, who have been propitiated by *baksheesh*;—now again the eternal *sakkas*, with their distended goat-skins, filled with water of the Nile, borne on their backs, holding in their hands their little brass cup for the use of the thirsty souls who need refreshment. Here come their more potent rivals, the sherbet-

vendors, clinking their glasses with seductive sound ;— there women hawking their round flat cakes of Arab bread, almost as salt as the ocean spray. Now, again, we are wholly impeded in our path, or, at least, find considerable difficulty in moving along, owing to our being entangled by a noisy crowd of Cairene women, who, with their attendant slaves, are admiring the splendour of the diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and other precious stones, temptingly exposed in the alcoves of some of the wealthier jewellers, who, thinking that some of the pilgrims might be tempted to make large purchases, had, on the occasion of our visit, exposed many of their most costly wares and valuable gems for sale. No greater difficulty can be found, amidst all the obstructions of the bazaar, than that of attempting to pass a bevy of such females, as they stop to kill time by retailing the last piece of scandal current, or by chattering not with the eunuchs merely, but with handsome species of male passengers also, in a most unreserved, and, it might be thought by Alla Franca ladies, indelicate, jargon. At length we reach the lower end of the bazaar, and hope to escape at last from the oppressive throng, but are again assailed by beggars swarming like vermin, or idiots of almost every age, who come thronging round the wanderer's path, some tearing his ears with their discordant yells of frenzy, some touching his heart with their plaintive and affecting cry for *paras* to save them from starvation ; and now, again, by some of the keepers belonging to the Máristán (Morostan, or Muristan, the Bedlam of Cairo)

hunting eagerly amidst the confused crowd for maniacs who have escaped from their confinement.

“The origin of the establishment of these houses of refuge for the insane, to which I here refer, and several of them are in existence in this country, may not be known to your Highnesses; and with your permission I will give an account of their foundation. In the year 276 of the Hegira (870 A.D.) Ahmed Abu e Tooloon, who had usurped the sovereignty of Egypt, built the first *máristán* at Cairo. In this action he was led by motives of pure philanthropy, and not with any ambitious idea of perpetuating his name. The circumstances which induced it were sufficiently romantic and extraordinary. A lady of distinction having incurred the odium of her husband, was given by him—on the pretence that she was insane—into the charge of keepers. She escaped, however, from her place of confinement, and happening to cross the path of the Sultan, she threw herself at his feet, and implored his august protection. The injustice of the lady’s detention was soon made apparent, and this detention having led to the discovery of many other similar cases, the sovereign resolved on founding a public institution for the reception of maniacs on such a basis that similar practices could never again take place. Two *máristáns* were then built—the one near the *karamédan* (hippodrome), where the scene of the Sultan’s meeting with the injured lady took place; the other between the Kalat-el-Kebsh and the island of Boolák. Both of these institutions, owing to the funds for their support

having been embezzled, fell into neglect. The Sultan Kalaoón, however (1287 A.D.), actuated by the most humane intentions, caused the present máristán adjoining the Mosque—which bears his name—to be erected for the reception of the numerous unhappy maniacs whom he encountered wandering about the city in the most destitute condition. The same philanthropic sovereign attached a Special Medical Board and a staff of nurses to this new institution, inspected all its arrangements in his own person, and even appointed a band of musicians to perform, for the greater benefit of the lunatics, on certain days in the courtyard. The platform, which was used for the purpose, still exists. But this institution also, like almost all the other benevolent institutions founded by humane Egyptian rulers of olden times, fell, in its turn, into decay, the funds having been appropriated by a set of rascally superintendents. In more modern times (1833 A.D.) those two philanthropic Moslems, Saydel Mahrookee and Ahmed Pacha Táher, expended large sums in repairing the edifice and carrying out the intentions of the benevolent founder. When the restoration of the building was effected, it contained two small oblong courts, surrounded by cells, one of which was destined for the male patients, the other for the female. Each cell was lighted by a small grated window, through which the maniac's chain was fastened to the outside wall. The patients were located in the cells according to the different stages or nature of their attacks—the raving maniacs strongly chained, and wearing a collar and handcuffs, in one compartment; the melancholy mad in

another; the laughing idiots in a third. The food which they all received was regulated according to the diet prescribed by the Hakim Bachi.

“Of late years, the attention of the Egyptian Government has been more closely drawn to the condition of these establishments. Fearful abuses, it was found, had gradually crept into their management: the heart sickened at the sight of that abode of misery and wretchedness. An *Alla Franca Lunatic Asylum* has been instituted, under the able and humane superintendence of Europeans. Nevertheless, as I have indicated in my description of the motley crowd in the bazaar, lunatics may be still seen wandering about the streets of Cairo and Alexandria uncared for, if not unheeded—a state of things which would not exist if the *Camasses* did their duty.

“But, to return from this digression. It was with difficulty that my *arkadash* and myself were able at last to extricate ourselves from the rabble of this bazaar, and rejoin each other beyond its limits. This feat accomplished, we went on to the Mahaim, situated close to the *Máristán*. Here our ears were assailed by the deafening noise of the coppersmiths, as they struck their ponderous hammers on the metal they were beating into various shapes. From this district, with its incessant dinging, donging, banging, booming, clattering, rattling sounds, we were soon glad to make our escape, and reach the more placid and quiet quarter of the tailors. Here I had an especial interest of my own, in inspecting the progress of the Greek fabricators, who sat doubled up on their snug boards, busily engaged

in finishing off the Nizam uniforms which were required for my *corps de garde*, for their journey to El Hejaz. Leaving these heroes of the needle, we walked into that quarter, to which your English travellers have chosen to give, I know not why, that singular denomination, '*Within the Chains.*' It was lined with alcoves, on the carpeted floors of which were squatted wealthy Osmanlee merchants from Stamboul, traders in costly silks, brocades, and rich embroideries. These worthy Turks have characteristics, both moral and physical, wholly their own. One of their most striking features is their utter impassibility as they sit, eternally smoking their elegantly encrusted amber mouth-piece narghilés, with an air of absorption in deep devotion, or in dreams of the ultimate pleasures of the Harem Paradise of the Prophet, and varying only their listless occupation by occasional sips of their fragrant Mocha. Most of them, if not really advanced in years, had adopted an air of age. A long white beard appears to be affected among these Turks as the true type of manly beauty, and this venerable effect is frequently produced, I understand, by the use of a certain bleaching powder. Certainly their broad and burly figures are devoid of any appearance of youthful vigour or true manliness, albeit their countenances are generally florid and flushy; and the fez, drawn down to the very eyebrows over their shorn heads, adds greatly to the general heaviness of their appearance.

"These men affect a great repute for *purity* of morals, especially among themselves. Weighed in the scale, by your European standard of morality"—

this was again addressed to the Cocona—"their repute might appear of little worth.

"On the occasion of this exceptional visit to the Khan-el Khaleelee, we determined to pay our respects, more especially, to two of our old acquaintances, with whom we had frequently transacted business. The one, whom I have designated '*The Frugal Notable*,' was Ali Ahmed, one of the greatest sensualists in the Khan, it was said, although affecting great austerity. We found him in his sky-blue silk robe and white turban, squatted on the carpet which covered his shop platform, calmly and patiently awaiting the approach of customers, for he spoke rarely, and never hawked his wares aloud. Indeed, as his pipe was *seldom* by any accident removed from his mouth, such reserve became imperative. At the same time, he was one of the most amiable of his fraternity in the Khan. This shop offered the rarest mixture of incongruous articles, both modern and antique, and frequently of the most costly description, huddled together in confusion—singular old embossed copper dishes—Persian narghilés in gold, silver, and painted glass—hand-mirrors framed in mother-of-pearl elaborately carved—elegantly inlaid *soofras* (tables)—gold and silver perfume censers—*Khorastan* steel bells for narghilés—China and Japan findjans with richly jewelled zarfs—amber necklaces—Damascus yatagans and khangars curiously inlaid, with handles of agate, ivory, or gold, studded with diamonds and other precious stones—knickknacks innumerable and indefinable, to suit the fastidious taste of Europeans as well as Orientals.



“Taking up a pair of richly embroidered papooshes, which I fancied might just fit Léylak, the favourite slave of the Princess Fatimah, I examined them with an air of pretended indifference. I knew that Ali Ahmed had a keen eye to business, and demanded the most exorbitant prices for his wares. But our ‘*frugal*’ friend was too cunning to be taken in. In spite of my manner of asking, as if curiously, the price of his slippers, he coolly demanded at once two hundred piastres for them, and, when I remonstrated with him, quietly replied, with an air of devotion and emotion combined, ‘What would you have me do, Kislak Agaci? Allah has bestowed on me children to the amount of the magic number of seven, as many children as there are heavens. *Allah-il-Allah—Mahomèt resoul Allah!* They are all *daughters*, Effendi, and, by the beard of the Prophet, I am bound, as a devout man, to find them suitable marriage portions.’ It was useless my repeating, with a good-humoured air of disbelief, ‘*Bosh! bosh! la! la!*’ the crafty hypocrite was not to be moved. He replaced the slippers on a shelf, saying, in the most devout manner, ‘*Yeftak Allah! Yeftak Allah!*’ (‘God will find me a way to effect a sale’), and the upshot of the matter was, that the piastres passed into the hands of ‘*frugal*’ Ahmed Ali, and the slippers into mine.

“The other old acquaintance, to whose *doka* (shop) we bent our steps, was a merchant, to whom we had given the nickname of the ‘*Exquisite Notable*,’ by name Abdallah Selim. I had had many transactions with him, and I knew the fellow well. Indeed, I had often visited his selamlick; for he kept open house,

and lived in a round of pleasure and excitement. He was a native of Soudan—a merry light-hearted being, who eschewed matrimony and studied only how best he might amuse himself, when his hours of business were gone by. Originally he had been the slave of Mustapha Hassan, the defunct owner of the establishment, who, a few weeks before his death, enfranchised the lucky, careless-hearted young fellow, and, at his demise, left him a considerable fortune, besides his business. His dress, which had earned for him the designation we gave him of '*The Exquisite*' is worth describing to your Highnesses. He was invariably attired in the gayest colours, and exhibited an endless variety of dress. On the day in question, he wore an elegant sky-blue cashmere jacket, richly embroidered with silver and studded with silver buttons. His trousers were of blue silk brocade, with a broad stripe of silver lace down either side, made like a petticoat, out of one piece, and sewn together below so as to leave spaces for his feet to pass, and then drawn up and gathered round his waist, by a band passed through the upper hem and tied in front. This sustaining band was securely fastened doubtless, or he might have soon verified the facetious saying of his Highness the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, that 'the Turk always wanted one button to his trousers, and, lacking that, was wont to lose them altogether.' Around his loins was wrapped a beautiful cashmere shawl of great value. In its folds was deposited his handsome gold watch, which hung suspended from his neck by two massive gold chains, thick as a man's finger. On to these chains was passed also a ring, on which was strung

a valuable collection of antique coins. His stock in trade consisted chiefly of that kind of merchandise which is most in vogue among the female sex—home manufactured satins—silks for the fabrication of habaraha and burkos—richly embroidered stuffs for ladies' trousers—*lutte* (pearls of the Red Sea), and a variety of other expensive articles, likely to charm the eyes of women.

“As may be naturally supposed, we found the Exquisite's doka surrounded by an assemblage of stars from the harems of the wealthy Pachas. The shop had a great renown in Cairo; and this repute was doubtless increased by the knowledge that the Exquisite was too gallant an individual ever to press his fair or dusky customers for the settlement of their *resabs* (accounts). His acquaintances were wont to reproach him continually for the laxity with which he transacted his business, and to prognosticate that he must surely come to bankruptcy and ruin. ‘*La! la! Malesch? Malesch?*’ (‘No! no! What does it matter? What does it matter?’) would be his reply to these remonstrances as he clicked his tongue, after the fashion of his countrymen. ‘*Talaris* (the dollar pieces current in Egypt) are made to roll. When the last has rolled out of my pockets Allah will surely fill them with more, and then the world will come to an end. I am not like my neighbour Ali Ahmen, who has *seven* daughters,’ he would add with a laugh and a sneer. On this occasion several orders were given the light-hearted fellow by my *arkadash*; and, from the numerous bundles of merchandise which I saw carried off by the slaves who accompanied the fair inmates of the harem, I conclude

that my merry friend had driven a thriving trade that day.

“On quitting the ‘*Exquisite Notable*’ we stumbled on the Grand Eunuch of her Highness the Princess Tafeadah, who entreated us to enter a kahvené with him and smoke a social narghilé. The coffee-shop being very full, we sat down on the wooden bench outside, and watched the throngs of people hurrying to and fro, amidst all the impediments which opposed their progress. Now it was a long string of camels, laden with rough stones, slung in rope-net panniers; and, as the beasts were led by a long cord, fastened round the nose of the foremost, and thence passed to the noses of the others, all pedestrians were obliged to run between the legs of the animals, or wait at street corners until the train of stately, snail-paced beasts had moved on. And now it was another string, carrying heaps of fuel fabricated of donkeys’ and camels’ manure, mixed with clay and dried in the sun, or laden with that dry provender for the food of beasts, which the Fellahs and Arabs will sometimes boil for their own eating. And, during all this period of trial to the patience of passing mankind, the ear was deafened by the cries of the camel-drivers, ‘*Ilk! Ilk!*’ (‘Kneel down!’), or ‘*Gákl! Gákl!*’ (‘Go on!’), and ‘*Hai! Hai!*’ (‘Gently!’), as they guided their beasts along the narrow streets. Now came a line of half a dozen *arabas* (country carts) filled with earth, some drawn by donkeys, others by oxen, all trundling along with that sharp grating noise caused by the unsteady revolutions of their ungreased wheels. Then poured on droves of sheep, bleating

sadly as they passed on to the slaughter-houses; goats, too, with their tinkling bells, stopping now and then to nibble at any provender which chance might have scattered on the ground; and flocks of gaunt turkeys, mingling their cackling with the hoarse croaking of the hawks and falcons which were being conveyed to market. No less obstructive to general movement were the perpetual hawkers of onions, gourds, pumpkins, lettuces, and other fruits and vegetables, who strolled along howling forth the cheapness and excellence of their produce, or cursing, when some stray sheep or goat contrived by a stealthy snatch to make havoc among their vegetable store.

“But, amidst all these sights and scenes, nothing contrived to amuse my companions and myself so much as the performance of an obstreperous donkey, who, in the coolest and most unceremonious manner, just as he had reached the corner of the street, kicked up his heels and threw his rider, a little Jew, into the midst of a tray of flat round loaves of bread, which a poor old Arab woman was offering for sale. The Yahooodee, who was dressed in holiday attire, rolled like a ball out of the tray on the sandy road, and an infuriated horde of Arab and Fellah women immediately made a rush on the unfortunate infidel, to take their revenge on him for the defilement the whole mass of bread had suffered from contact with his body. A *carvass*, however, quickly interfered, and raised the trembling little Jew, as he shouted to the raging women, ‘*Bismillah! Allahumma salli alayh!*’ (‘In the name of Allah! Allah have mercy on him!’) The

maledictions of the old Arab *Etmektchi* (bread-dealer) did not cease meanwhile, and curses were yelled on the unlucky infidel, to the effect that his portion might be hell, until he had been compelled to loosen his purse strings, and pay handsomely for the defilement of the market woman's store. During this scene the cunning donkey, whose vagaries had been the cause of all, was actively employed in munching the scattered bread, and dealing kicks right and left at all who attempted to disturb him from his savoury meal, whilst the surrounding crowd were shouting to the beast, '*Mashallah! Mashallah!*' ('Bravo! Bravo!'), and to the unlucky Jew, 'May Allah refrigerate his countenance! May his shadow grow less! May the plague dwell in his house! May his wife be childless!'

"Having been commissioned by a young Nubian slave, who had not long entered the harem of her Highness the Princess Fatimah, to procure her some handsome articles of *second-hand* wearing apparel,—for, as your Highnesses may be aware, we often execute little commissions for the odalisques and oustas,—I made my temena to the Kislak Agaci of her Highness, and pressed my companions to accompany me to another bazaar, where such articles were to be purchased—a bazaar so closely resembling that which is called in Constantinople the *Bit* (Lice) Bazaar, that, without much outrage of propriety, it might bear the same name.

"Here were exposed for sale a variety of very magnificent costumes, which had found their way, by many a strange *kismet*, into this singular market of old

clothes. It would occupy more than the thousand and one nights of Arabian story, were I to endeavour to give even the briefest sketch of the details which might relate to the histories of the articles exposed for sale. The wardrobes of many a defunct Prince, Pacha, Bey, Minister, and Kishlar Agaci were there; and there, too, hundreds of rich, scarcely-soiled garments, costly embroidered habarahs, feredjes, jackets, and trousers, which may once have belonged to departed houris of some Sultan's, Viceroy's, or Pacha's harem, and which were destined by fate, perhaps, to sink in time so low as to envelop the filthy, emaciated forms of Egyptian, Arab, Nubian, Abyssinian, or Fellah women of the common order.

“Some of my *arkadash*, who had never entered this strange catacomb of dress before, looked around them with amazement. The garments were all inflated with air, and, as they thus hung like huge dolls, bore the hideous semblance of the headless carcasses of their late owners. ‘*Batal! batal! Méckrouh birchéy dir!*’ (‘Bad! bad! This is abominable!’) they ejaculated. They could scarcely be prevailed on to approach the hooks on which the rich robes of honour, the embroidered kaptans, the jackets trimmed with gold and silver lace, were suspended in this spectral guise. They shrank back with dismay, as though they saw before them spirits of the dead risen to appear upon the earth again. The horror and dread of some of my friends arose, as I afterwards discovered, from the idea that the germs of *judari* (small-pox), *táun* (plague), or *rik-el-asfar* (cholera), might lie nestled in the folds of these

discarded garments of the dead. I own I too was a prey to some of these misgivings; and I was on the point of turning away, faint-hearted, when I espied a eunuch with a bale of goods in his hands, endeavouring to drive a bargain with one of the old clothes-men, whose very aspect stamped him as a Jew. I approached the eunuch, and found, on inquiry, that he was anxious to dispose of the wardrobe of a favourite slave belonging to the harem of a princess, who had, only a few days before, breathed her last from the effects of an accident. I begged to inspect the collection of dresses, and found them to be without soil or rent; and discovering that the Jew was no ways disposed to give the price demanded by the eunuch, I handed over the paras, and despatched a bearer with the vendor to the citadel, where he was instructed to leave the purchase I had made. The Nubian slave to whom my purchase was delivered, was highly delighted, as I afterwards learned, at the manner in which I had laid out the saving of her *baksheesh*.

“Yes, *baksheesh*, Khanoum Effendem,” continued Yusuf, again addressing his discourse to the Cocona. “It would have been only as a free woman that the money earned would have been called her *gemkêeh* (wages). Nevertheless, as is well known to their Highnesses, the *oustas* who conduct themselves quietly and discreetly in the harems receive plenty of *sish*, as is the familiar term given to *baksheesh* in the Abodes of Bliss.

“On quitting the singular market for cast-off clothes, my companions and myself passed along some very narrow streets, which afforded us a most pleasant



and refreshing shade ; for the hot and unhealthy wind which prevailed at that season had rendered the atmosphere, under the blaze of the sun, almost unbearable. In this quarter, so characteristic of some of our Eastern cities, the *mushrebéehs* almost touched each other on opposite sides of the way, whilst coarse, matting or canvas was suspended from house to house, and rendered the welcome shade still more complete. Above the heavy walls of the gardens which skirted portions of these lanes, palms and acacias, banana, orange, lemon, and pomegranate trees reared their graceful heads ; graceful still in form, although utterly deficient in freshness of colour, for heavy coatings of dust and sand, heaped on the foliage, had long since clogged up from view every vestige of green.

“ Emerging from these shady lanes, we strolled through the Hámzáwee Bazaar, in which the shops are kept by *Kelb el Nassáreen*, and where I purchased a few Alla Franca articles, and thus reached the Terbeea. Here the atmosphere afforded a continual sense of enjoyment to the olfactory nerves. It is the quarter of the perfumers ; and the whole place was redolent with the odour of jasmin, bergamot, atar-gul, musk, amber, sandal-wood, and a hundred other essences. Here, too, are sold all the numerous accessories of the toilets of our Egyptian houris ; cosmetics, perfumed depilatory powders, jars of rose-water, *sibhas* (rosaries) of ivory, with their occasional gold or silver beads, counting double or treble as influence in prayer ; wooden combs, Persian mirrors, with exquisitely-painted frames ; and

the hundred other articles the names of which a male being is too ignorant to enumerate.

“As may be naturally supposed, the place was crowded by a whole phalanx of females. Here they had dismounted from their donkeys, and shuffled along in their yellow papooshes on foot, all wearing their yashmacks most carefully wrapped around them. Some were attended by eunuchs, with their riding-whips in hand ; others were followed by pretty Galla women, sly Abyssinian girls, or hideous negresses. In all cases, *Frenks* could not fail to remark that any liberty of action these women seemed to enjoy was in appearance only. Many, it is true, were only accompanied by their little sons or daughters, whom they led by the hand, decked out in blue, red, or apple-green cloth jackets, richly embroidered in gold or silver, variegated silk Mameluke trousers and fancy skull-caps, ornamented with long bullion tassels. Even with no other attendance, children, thus led, are certain to insure respect for their mothers ; and, even were not this the case, the general tone of public manners, I must say, respects our females when thus wandering abroad. There may be some, perhaps, who sigh, with unwillingness, over this protection and respect ; but they resign themselves to their kismet, with an occasional ‘*Hipsi bridir,*’ or a far more pious ‘*Allah kereem.*’

“The haggling, the chaffering, the bargaining, the wrangling, and the jangling which were incessantly going on between the eager odalisques and wary merchants ; the roars of laughter from the houris, the

negresses, the children, and the eunuchs; the ceaseless jabbering, chattering, and screaming at cross purposes; the confusion of shrill tongues in this essentially female temple of discord, was rather more than my quietly-disposed companions and myself could bear. To save further torture to our ears, we hurried away and passed into the Fahamin.

“This spot was, at the time, one of considerable interest to me. Among the pilgrims whom I had seen the day before following the Mahmel procession, a great number had been Moghrebins; and I was curious to study their manners. Many, possibly, may have been relatives of the very Moorish and West-African traders whom I then saw before me selling *herums* (blankets), tarbooshes, burnouses, and coarse, heavy cloths, fabricated on the other side of the African continent. I made inquiries relative to these merchants of another land, and I learned that many of them were exceedingly wealthy, and that sundry of them were actually then preparing to join the Hadji caravan at Suez.

“Feeling rather fatigued, we entered the first *cahvé* at hand, and amused ourselves, whilst sipping our coffee, in studying the nature of the diversified concourse that was perpetually defiling before us. It was a moving scene of never flagging interest. Among the throng I was able to point out to some of my *arkadash* who had not long since arrived from Constantinople, and were strangers to the city, the Fellahs, the *actual* aborigines of the soil we were treading, and, as such, the veritable Egyptians. Most of them were tall, well

made, and active in gait and manner, possessing regular features, well-formed lips, fine teeth, curly black beards, and thick moustaches, low square foreheads, and soft, melancholy, expressive countenances. Those of Upper Egypt were of a light bronze colour, and thinner. They were, for the greater part, miserably clad in long blue robes, fastened round the loins by a red cloth belt, and short blue trousers, leaving the legs and feet bare. Their heads were covered by dirty white turbans. These Fellahs, as I informed my friends, are heavily taxed, and although not actually reduced to a state of abject submission, are only too often considered and treated as mere beasts of burden, and loaded with contemptuous epithets. They generally appear listless, as though bereft of all hope, and are difficult to be moved. Thus, when the banner of Egyptian independence was raised during the reign of Mahomet Ali the Great, they never attempted to rally round their liberator.

“On this occasion a great many had gathered together to take part in the procession of a Fellah marriage, which passed in front of us. This procession was in itself an interesting sight to most, and a novel one to some. First and foremost came a whole host of Fellah women, whose forms and features bore a striking resemblance to the beautiful antique statues of Isis. These women are generally graceful and elegant in their deportment. They have an upright air and firm tread of step, utterly at variance with the waddling shuffling gait of most Turkish and Egyptian women.

Their attire is invariably the same long blue robe, their heads being covered with a species of tarboosh or turban, to which is attached a silk handkerchief, covering all the lower part of the face, and hanging down in a long peak on the bust. Following this attendant crowd in the wedding procession came one of the female relatives of the bridegroom, carrying on her head a small wooden box painted green, and uttering as she walked with measured step the *zaghareet* (*zaghritah*, *zaghurutah*, *zagharith*, or *ziraleet*), a piercingly shrill cry of joy. The procession passed on and entered the bazaar for the purpose of making the usual wedding purchases, which generally comprise no more than a handkerchief, a piece of calico, a few yards of gauze, and such simple materials of feminine costume.

“Those of my companions who had never before visited El Masr showed their anxiety to learn some still further particulars as to the habits, customs, and manner of life of these veritable descendants of the ancient Egyptians. I endeavoured, therefore, to enlighten them with a faint sketch of this interesting people, which may not be unacceptable even to your Highnesses. They live huddled together with their beasts of burden, their live stock, and poultry, much as I have heard, Khanoum Effendem, as is the case among the lower classes in your own distant Ireland”—this was again addressed to the Cocona. “Their habitations are no more than mud-built huts thatched with mud-plastered straw. In the centre of each of their dwellings is planted a date tree, the lofty

branches of which overtop the roof, and are never cut or lopped from the belief that if this were the case the tree itself would perish. This date tree is considered to symbolise the words of the Prophet—‘Honour your paternal aunt, the date palm; for she was created of the earth of which Adam was formed.’ Rude as is the construction of these huts, the exterior is rendered pleasing to the eye by a picturesque covering of honeysuckle and clematis. The food of this people consists of flat cakes of bread highly seasoned with salt, country-made cheese, fresh dates, and dates preserved by being pressed flat when in a moist state, like the plums that come to us from the South of France, fish, when it can be had, scraps of mutton and pigeons, bananas, and other indigenous fruits, such as the *butteekh* (water melons), that delicious fruit of which each mouthful, says the Prophet, ‘worketh for the eater a thousand good works, cancelleth a thousand evil works, and raiseth him a thousand degrees, for it came from Paradise.’ The beverage of all is the pure water of the Nile. On the lord of the mansion the wife is bound to wait standing whilst he partakes of his meals. When he has finished, and turns away to enjoy the everlasting chibouque, the wife ventures to partake of his lordship’s leavings. Then follow the children in their turn, and the last remains of the repast are given to the slave, if the Fellah be rich enough to support one, or, if not, to any wandering Arab, or poor neighbour. Such is their general condition of existence. In some districts, however, where the huts have been destroyed by inun-

dation, his Highness the Viceroy Ismael Pacha has caused good substantial houses to be erected at his *own* expense.

“Another characteristic feature of the crowd which swarmed before us lay in the different members of the Arab tribes. Most of them were grave, sedate, haughty-looking men, with striking profiles, but with a forbidding expression of physiognomy, generally characterised by low cunning and daring contempt. In spite of the prohibition of the Egyptian Government, they all stalked about with a profusion of arms about their persons.

“For awhile our attention was called away from the eternally shifting panorama before us by the efforts of a professional Mohaddetyn to amuse the groups around the kahvené by reciting poetic tales in Arabic, and, whether we would or not, we were compelled to listen. He was one of that species of Mohaddetyn generally called Antaryeh, so named because accustomed to read and recite the exploits and adventures of Antar, the famous Arabian warrior and hero, who lived contemporaneously with the Prophet Mahomet. But another object soon excited our greater curiosity. This was the apparition of a poor unfortunate Sheik, who was being paraded along the streets on a hideous lean donkey (the animal being kept expressly for this purpose), with his face turned towards its tail, whilst a public crier accompanied the degraded wretch, proclaiming the crime of which he had been guilty, and warning all the by-standers of the danger and disgrace of committing a similar offence.

“Presently resounded near us the heavy trampling

of hoofs, and then rode by a party of Copts, attired, as usual, in dark habiliments, with black turbans on their heads, and we could not be otherwise than amused by the arrogant air of superiority assumed by these austere, taciturn, stiff-necked-looking individuals.

“*Frenks*, of course, as is usual, formed a notable component part of the miscellaneous throng, and were instantly remarked as they passed singly or in groups. Among these anomalous wanderers were individuals of almost every European nation, attired in their respective costumes, and forming a striking contrast, in their darker dress, with the varied bright-coloured garments of the gorgeous East. Israelites, too, shuffled and sneaked in ungainly walk ever and anon among the crowd, with their meek countenances, restless full eyes, and bird-like beaks of noses, constantly assailed by the yells of the street urchins, ‘May your lot be Djehannum!’ Easily distinguished among the *Frenks* might be picked out the Greeks, whether decked out in their magnificent national costumes or simply attired in plain European dress, by their jaunty, impudent strut, the sinister expression of their otherwise handsome countenances—an expression which would in itself almost justify our common epithet of ‘*rascally Greek*’—their undecided air about the mouth, and their supercilious smile. Strange altogether was the mixture of races which diversified our city—for now the eye fell on natives of Soudan, *babernish sawahili*, or low castes from Darfour—and now again *Haramanis* (natives of Mekkah), men of that proud, coarse, licentious, scurrilous race who look on themselves as the



Elect of the Prophet, and yet scruple not unmercifully to despoil the Hadjis, who visit their Holy Land. Yet I must not, however, be too hard on the race. These men, I must admit, possess the quality of courage, are stanch patriots, show much amiability of manner, and even a high sense of honour where their greed is not concerned, and moreover spend their gains with liberality. They are reputed, too, as good husbands and good parents. In their holy city they live luxuriously, are ardent lovers of good cheer, and pride themselves on the magnificence and taste of the appointments of their odalisks.

“Strange, indeed, in its diversity, was the scene unfolded before my companions and myself, as we lounged, studying and observing, on the bench of the kahvené.”

Here the good Yusuf stopped, as if fatigued with his continued exertions in speaking. Her Highness, the Lady Paramount, instantly comprehended that a little respite from his labours was required by our zealous Mohaddetyn. She clapped her hands. A refreshing chibouque was handed to the Kislár Agaci, and a pause of silence ensued, broken only by the whispers of the many ladies of the harem, as they discussed among themselves, with bated breath, the accounts of the outer world they had just heard.

## CHAPTER VI.

AFTER a brief time given to refreshment, our Mohadetyyn removed his chibouque from his mouth, handed it to a slave by his side, and, after bowing his head low to the Lady Paramount, continued his description of the *Outdoor life* in Cairo as witnessed by himself and his companions.

“On quitting the kahvené, before which we had enjoyed the curious and diversified panorama of which I have endeavoured to give your Highnesses a faint sketch, we continued our perambulation about the city. We were quickly stopped in our progress, however, by being blocked in amidst a vast concourse of people thickly packed together, in a small and narrow *darb*. A frightful hubbub almost deafened us at the same time; on all sides might be heard cries of ‘*Wallah! wallah! Ibn el Sheitan! Wassat yahu! Jaunib y’al. Wurda! murda! Batel! batel!*’ (‘What? what? Son of the devil! Dog! Go in the middle—keep clear of the sides. Take care! take care! Bad! bad!’) At first the cause of the confusion puzzled us. At length we discovered that an impudent *sakka* had obstructed the passage with a huge plump donkey, laden with two large goat-skins that were filled with the water of the Nile, at that season of

the year anything but clear or sweet. Instead of endeavouring to make way for the passing crowd, the *sakka* had evidently attempted to make a passage for himself by spurting his water through a hole in the neck of the goatskin, which he kept pressing with his hands all over the jammed, struggling, densely packed throng, that writhing with rage under the abominable inundation, uttered the objurgations and vociferations we had heard. But little did the *sakka* heed. Even such curses as 'May Allah refrigerate thy countenance!' 'Mayst thou burn as the fiery wick which consumes the oil!' had little effect on the insolent fellow, until he had fully achieved his purpose, after well-nigh emptying the contents of both his goatskins, when he drove his beast on through the space he had thus made, laughing in the beards of the drenched bystanders.

"As soon as we were able to proceed on our way I proposed a visit to other bazaars where I had purchases to make. I had been ordered by her Highness to procure a quantity of silk cord and gold lace for the further decoration of the *machmal* on its arrival at El Hejaz. During the period of actually travelling it is the custom to strip this conveyance of all its splendour. The embroidered covers and silver-gilt bells are carefully packed away, and brass ornaments are substituted. It is not until the time arrives for the reception of the *machmal* by the Cherif of Mekkah that all the gorgeous trappings are restored to their places, and even more rich appointments added. In order to obey the commands of her Highness then, in this respect, I went to

the *Akkadeen* and made the required purchases. Hence we passed into the Sookeréék bazaar, so conspicuous from the very beautiful fountain near which it stands, and here I bought for the express use of the Princess Fatimah, and the ladies of the harem who were to form her retinue during the pilgrimage, several boxes of delicious almonds, drums of Smyrna figs, packets of *ajneh*, (pressed dates), glass jars of sugar-plums, balls of rahat-lakoum, bags of sugar almonds and pistachio nuts, pots of conserve of roses, and other perfumed sweets, and finally lumps of that peculiar gum (mastic) which when dissolved in small quantities in water makes so pleasing and palatable a nectar, and mixed with raki composes a delicious drink, of which our ladies quaff their fill, as if it were the *neebh* drunk by the Prophet. This perfumed gum is manufactured in the island of Chios, in which his Highness, the Viceroy, Ismael Pacha, has an 'Abode of Bliss,' and where your Highnesses are always accustomed to stop when on your way to Constantinople.

“Knowing that my body-guard was not well supplied with arms, I begged my companions to accompany me next into the Soog-e-Sullah. It chanced to be a public auction day, and *dellals* were walking to and fro, exposing weapons for sale by holding them up high in their hands, whilst proposed purchasers shouted out their *temmen* (bid). I was fortunate enough to have several finely-tempered swords, and three or four excellent long-barrelled guns knocked down to me at very moderate prices.

“Going thence we entered the Kassobet Radwan,

where I purchased several pairs of *nals* (sandals) suitable for travelling in El Hejaz. My companions, meanwhile, occupied themselves by examining the immense variety of half-boots, shoes, and slippers, which were exposed for sale, and by making purchases of sundry pairs of clogs for the bath, for which they had received commissions from their Highnesses, the sisters of the Sultan. These clogs, without which, as your Highnesses well know, no ladies venture to enter the bath rooms on account of the temperature of the heated floors, were in this instance inlaid with mother-of-pearl, and richly ornamented with diamonds and other precious stones, with gold tassels hanging from the straps—clogs, in short, not unworthy of the honour of being worn by any Turkish or Egyptian Princess.

“Not wishing to set out for the Holy Land of the Moslems without laying in a good stock of creature-comforts for myself and my immediate attendants, I persuaded my *arkadash* to accompany me to the Mergoosh and Gamaleëh Bazaars, where I purchased large quantities of Mocha coffee, Turkish and Persian tobacco, Syrian soap, and wax candles. From the tobacco merchants it was impossible to refuse taking the proffered *baksheesh* in the shape of several packets of cigarettes made of Javach tobacco. We were none of us wrong, I imagine, to take our departure from this spot as speedily as possible, for the powerful odour emitted from the piles of Javach and strong acrid sert, which were exposed for sale, was almost too much for olfactory nerves, even when not of a very delicate nature, to bear.

“On reaching Soog-e-Zulluf, the common provision market of the capital, we stopped at the entrance to take a glance at the bustling, noisy, good-humoured throng of people, making their purchases from the vendors of cheese, caviare, cucumbers, tomatoes, and mutton, whilst flocks of hungry ravenous *kelbs* were everywhere crowding around them, and rushing between their legs. The show of poultry was of a very meagre order. We gazed with dismay on the lean fowls, the skeleton turkeys, and the half-starved pigeons. A terrible murrain raged at that time amongst the cattle in Egypt, and it would have almost appeared as if the poultry had been afflicted with the same disease.

“The Soog-é-Semmak, a public fish market, which you English, Khanoum Effendem, designate by the incomprehensible term of ‘*Billingsgate*,’ next attracted our attention. Here the air was impregnated, as was natural enough, I admit, by a strong odour of *balek* (fish), and that not of the freshest kind. This was no wonder, as most of the fish had been brought down from the Upper Nile. In fact, an almost overpowering smell of piscatorial saline effluvia made any stay in the locality anything but agreeable. Amidst the heterogeneous collection of inhabitants of the briny deep or muddy Nile, the most remarkable of which were river serpents and scorpions, and many other hideous deformities of the tenants of the flood, were shells also of an almost infinite variety, and skeletons of large fish hung up for show. A vessel, as we learned, had just arrived at Alexandria from Stamboul; and a Cairene fishmonger, who happened to be at the port on its arrival,

had purchased the whole of the cargo on board, and despatched it to Cairo. One of the most conspicuous objects in this importation was a huge sword-fish, which the fishmonger was cutting up, as we approached, in order to sell it in slices. It was about eight feet long. The head had been dissevered; but as it lay on the board its large fiery eyes seemed still to be lighted up with life. The formidable weapon which protrudes from the upper jaw of this fish, and from which the name is derived, looked as strong, hard, and keenly tempered as a Damascus scimitar. I had frequently seen specimens of this singular fish in the *balek* markets of Istamboul; but such a monster of the deep I had never beheld until then."

The Kislar Agaci paused.

"*Taib! Taib!*" said the Cocona, seeing that he was again somewhat exhausted. "I am sure that the venerable Yusuf must be fatigued; and if your Highness will permit me," she continued addressing herself to the Lady Paramount, "I will relieve our Mohaddetyñ for a while by relating to you a sight I one day witnessed at Constantinople."

"*Mashallah! Mashallah!*" responded her Highness, still puffing away at her cigarette; and the Cocona, thus encouraged, proceeded to narrate the story of "The Headless Body."

"One day I happened to enter the *Balek Bazaar*, and there, gathered together in a circle in the narrow cross-way, where the fish market is held, I found a mass of men. I attributed this concourse at first to the performance of some street jugglers, or an exhibition of

dancing bears. On making my way through the crowd, as I was obliged to do, I suddenly saw lying before me, to my excessive horror, a headless corpse. There it lay on the ground, clothed in jacket and blue trousers. The head, covered with a *hat*, was placed between the legs, and thus partially concealed from sight.

“As I stood there transfixed and trembling, a stolid Turk turned round to look at me. On seeing a European woman by his side, he said, with evident inuendo, ‘Ah! it seems even the heads of those who wear hats may be cut off from their bodies.’ I understood a portion of his meaning, for I was aware that Moslem men entertain a great detestation of all hats and caps.”

“Yes, Khanoum Effendem,” interrupted the venerable Yusuf, “the Sons of the Faithful are prohibited their use, because when saying their *namaz* they are obliged to touch the ground with their heads, and this ceremony is not prevented either by turban, fez, or tarboosh.”

“*Taib! Taib!*” replied the Cocona. “But, at the same time, I must except his Highness the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, from any prejudice on the point. On the magnificent bracelet presented to you by the Viceroy—which your Highness did me the honour to show me—his portrait is there represented in entire European costume, with the *Frank hat* on his head. But to continue my story. I turned away with disgust as soon as I was able from the fearful object before me, and entered the large bazaar close by. Here I was surprised to see the indifference with which men were going about on their daily avocations and pleasures, as if the result of so terrible a tragedy were not lying within a few



yards of them. Turks and Armenians were entering, as usual, the *dokan kebabi* (cook-shops), and the *kebabdjis* smiled on them to invite them in as though nothing had happened. Those despised creatures, the Jews, were eating their pancakes fried in oil unheeding. Two *effendisi* (inspectors of police) walked out of the shop of an *etimektchi* (baker), or *shekerdgi* (confectioner), where they had been examining, as in duty bound, the weights and measures, and stopped to talk with some *bostandgi-bachi* (inspectors of the river-police); but their discourse was by no means of the shocking scene close by. Greek and Armenian *astardgi* (linen merchants) were standing at the door of a *tutingi* (tobacconist), conversing on the rise in the price of the golden-leafed tobacco: that subject interested them far more than the exposure of the headless wretch within so short a distance of them. The very Turkish beggars in their tattered *beneesh* (cloaks) whined to me for *paras* without a thought of the unhappy being. All seemed utter carelessness and indifference as to the sight which was to me so striking and so terrible.

“Under the pretext that the day was hot, and that I needed refreshment, I entered the shop of an Armenian, who presented me with a glass of cooling sherbet. Still I felt faint at the recollection of the disgusting sight on which I had stumbled. The Armenian, seeing my state, kindly handed me an old rush-bottomed chair, the only seat of the kind he possessed, and begged me to rest myself awhile. After a minute’s repose, I narrated to him the spectacle I had witnessed in the

fish-market, and he told me that the headless body which had excited my surprise and disgust had been lying exposed in the Balak Bazaar for upwards of three days, to the great annoyance of the fishmongers, and the interruption of their business. Little by little he then narrated to me the story of the beheaded man.

“The body, it seems, was that of an Armenian, named Banihan, who had been caught four years before in intimate relations with a Turkish woman. The law in such a case ordains that the transgressor must either become a Mussulman, or suffer death. A Turk would simply have been handed over to the Furashes to be punished with the bastinado on his feet. Banihan became an apostate. Some time afterwards, however, he contrived to slip away unobserved to one of the Greek islands, where he once again embraced Christianity. Four years passed away. The unlucky Banihan fancied that the whole affair had been blown over and utterly forgotten, and he returned to Constantinople in his native costume. He was recognised, however, and denounced by some Moslem fanatics. The Moslem law, even although considered far more lenient than in former days, was called on to interfere. I have been long enough in these countries to be aware that, in the East, the Koran and the code of laws are one, and that the law is at once both civil and ecclesiastical; I know, too, that in many cases the Turkish law is made subservient to the fanaticism of the lower orders of the people.

“In the case of Banihan, the Armenian, the outcry

and uproar were tremendous. The European Consul-General protested in his favour, but in vain. Their interference was useless against the popular excitement at the idea of his crime. The Armenian was offered his liberty, however, on the condition that he should again become an apostate; but now he was resolute in his refusal. Even more was done: means of escape were thrown in the way of the criminal; but, strange to say, he refused to avail himself of these means. He asserted that he could not live elsewhere than in Stamboul, and should die of grief were he to leave it; and he declared that he should equally die of shame were he to purchase the privilege of remaining at the price of a *second* apostacy. His execution then followed, as a matter of course. His co-religionists, as I heard from the friendly Armenian, who told me this sad tale, looked on Banihan as a martyr, and burned candles in his honour as though he were a saint.

“I afterwards learned that on the evening of the third day on which his corpse had been exposed, three Yahoodi, according to custom, carried the body on their shoulders and threw it into the Bosphorus, on the spot where the dead horses and dogs are cast, as food for the fish which swarm there in shoals. The venerable Kislár Agaci has already informed us on a previous evening that an imperial edict exists against the catching of these fish. A report has reached me that this edict is suspended in favour of the diplomatic corps; but whether this be true or not, it is certain that carcasses are continually being washed up by the tide on the banks of this fearful spot.”

“*Kelb el Nasraneel! Allah hereem! Allah-il-Allah—Mahomet resoul Allah!*” was ejaculated by the females in full chorus, as the Cocona finished her narrative of “The Headless Body;” and this pious execration was all the sympathy shown for the luckless Armenian.

The Mohaddetyn now was ready to proceed with his own description of the ‘*Outer life*’ of Cairo.

“On quitting the bazaars, in order to continue our perambulations,” he resumed, “we all proceeded to the Tumbalee *hamman* (bath), as it was the largest in the city. Here both myself and my companions underwent the luxury of the usual ablutions. These baths are now, as I understand, highly appreciated by Frenks even in their own countries. Many have given glowing descriptions of them in the books they have written on their travels in the East: but none, perhaps, is so thoroughly accurate as that which I have read in the French language, in the written words of the great Franzawee bookmaker, Alexandre Dumas.”

Perhaps it were not misplaced if I were here to lay before my readers a translation of that admirable pen-and-ink sketch contained in one of his “*Impressions de Voyage*,” to which the cultivated and well-informed Kislár Agaci referred.

“The next morning,” says that accomplished writer, Monsieur Alexandre Dumas, “I presented myself at the bath at Cairo the moment it was opened. After the Mosque, the bath is the finest establishment of Oriental cities. The one to which I was conducted is of simple architecture, and neatly ornamented. At the entrance is a large vestibule, having rooms on the right and left

for the reception of cloaks, and at the end a door hermetically closed. Through this door you pass into a room warmer than the surrounding atmosphere, and from this (as I afterwards learned) you may retreat if you choose. But put your foot into one of the adjoining closets, and you are no longer your own master. Two attendants seize you, and, for the time, you are the property of the establishment. Much to my surprise, this was my own predicament. I had scarcely entered a closet, when two strong men laid hold of me, and in an instant I was stripped to the skin.

“One of them then passed a linen shawl round my waist, whilst the other buckled on my feet a gigantic pair of clogs, which at once made me a foot taller. This mode of shoeing not only rendered flight impossible, but by its clumsy elevation, destroyed one’s equilibrium; and I should inevitably have fallen had not the two men supported me on either side. I was now fairly caught. I could not retreat; and so I suffered them to lead me where they would.

“We passed into another room. Here, whatever might be my resignation, the vapour and heat stifled me. I fancied that my guides had mistaken the way, and tumbled me into an oven. I tried to shake off my gaolers; but my resistance had been anticipated. Besides I was in no condition for a trial of strength, and was obliged to own myself vanquished.

“In a few moments I was astonished to perceive that, as the perspiration poured from me, my lungs began to dilate, and my respiration returned. In this state I passed through five or six rooms, in each of

which the heat increased so rapidly, that I began to believe man had for five thousand years mistaken his proper element, and his appropriate designation was boiling or roasting. At last we came to the furnace. Here the fog of the steam was so dense, that I could not see two steps before me: and the heat was now so wholly insupportable that I partially fainted.

“I shut my eyes, and resigned myself to my guides in utter hopelessness. After leading me, or rather carrying me, a few steps farther, they took off my girdle, unhooked my clogs, and extended me, half swooning, on something like a marble table in the middle of the apartment.

“Here, again, I became accustomed to the infernal atmosphere. I prudently took advantage of the gradual return of my faculties, and looked about me. With my other senses my sight revived; and, despite fog, I made out with tolerable accuracy the surrounding objects.

“My tormentors seemed to have forgotten me for a moment. They were busy at one side of the room. I lay in the centre of a large square saloon, encrusted to the height of five or six feet with variously coloured marbles. A series of spouts threw out, incessantly, streams of smoking water, which, falling on the pavement beneath, glided thence into four basins, like cauldrons, at the four corners of the room. On the surface of the water in these basins was an indefinite number of bald heads bobbing about, and expressing by the most grotesque contortions of fun various degrees of felicity.

This spectacle so occupied my attention, that I scarcely heeded the return of my masters. They came, however—one with a huge wooden bowl of soap-suds; the other with a ball of fine hemp. Suddenly one of the rascals covered my face and neck with his soap-suds, and the other, seizing me by the shoulder, rubbed my face and breast with his ball of hemp ferociously.

“This treatment, and the pain induced by it, were so perfectly intolerable, that all my powers of resistance and resentment waked up at once. I bolted upright, kicked my hempen friend half across the room, and planted my fist in the face of him of the soap-suds, with such good will, that he lay sprawling on the floor. Then, knowing no other remedy for the pain of the soap, which was blistering my skin, I made straight for the basin which appeared the most inhabited, and plunged boldly in.

“I had made a monstrous error in judgment. The remedy was worse than the disease. Before, only my face and neck were cauterised, now, my whole body was scalded. The water was boiling! I yelled with pain! I sprang on and over my neighbours, who evidently could not understand my case, and got out of the cauldron, as quickly as I got in. Rapid as I had been, I had not been sufficiently so, to escape the effect of my immersion. My body was as red as a lobster! I was horrified! Was I dreaming? borne along on a horrible night-mare? No! there was no delusion! Here, under my very eyes, were men, stewing in a bath, of which I had tried the temperature; and they evidently took delight in the operation! What could it mean?

My notions of pain and pleasure had become confused. They could enjoy that, which to me was agony. I once more resolved to resign myself to my fate. I doubted my own judgment; I mistrusted my own senses, so I determined again to submit to my tormentors.

“They had recovered from my assault, and they came to me again. I followed them, without further resistance, to another basin. They made signs to me to descend the steps. I obeyed, and found myself in water heated to about 110° Fahrenheit. This actually appeared temperate to me. From this I passed to another of a higher temperature, but still supportable. I remained in it, as in the first, about three minutes. I thus came at last to the fourth—in which I had commenced my infernal apprenticeship. I approached it with the greatest repugnance. I had made up my mind to go through with my desperate adventure, however. I first dipped my toes in the water. It was hot, certainly, but did not feel so scalding as before. I gradually immersed my whole body. What was my surprise to find the cauldron endurable! In a few seconds I thought no more of it, although I am confident the heat of the water must have reached 140° or 150°. When I emerged, my skin had changed from the lobster scarlet to a deep crimson.

“My attendants now again took me in hand. They replaced the linen round my waist, bound a shawl on my head, and led me back through the rooms by which I had entered (taking care to add to my covering at each change of atmosphere), until I arrived at the chamber where I had been so unceremoniously stripped.



Here I found a good carpet and pillow. My turban and girdle were now taken off. I was enveloped in a large woollen gown, laid down like an infant, and left alone.

“I had now an indefinable feeling of comfort. I was perfectly happy, yet so exhausted that when the door opened, half an hour after, I had not changed my position by the movement of a finger or a muscle.

“The new comer was a heavy and well-built Arab. He approached my couch with some evident purpose in his mind. I looked on him with all the dread natural to a man who had already passed such an ordeal as that which I have described, but I was too weak to attempt to rise. He took my left hand and cracked all my joints, he then did the same with the right. After this manipulation of my hands he administered the same discipline to my feet and knees. Then, to complete the operation he dexterously threw me on my face, in the position of a pigeon about to be broiled, and gave me the finishing stroke by cracking the vertebræ of my spine! I screamed with terror, thinking my backbone broken to a certainty. My lusty Arab, unheeding my cries of alarm, then kneaded my arms, legs, and thighs for about a quarter of an hour, after which he left me.

“I was weaker than ever. My joints all pained me, and I had not strength sufficient to cover myself with the carpet. A servant now brought me coffee, pastilles, and a pipe, and left me to intoxicate myself with perfume and tobacco. I passed half an hour in a drowsy state, lost in the capricious reveries of a delicious

inebriation. I experienced a feeling of happiness unknown to me before, and entertained a supreme indifference to all earthly things.

“From this state of delightful listlessness and apathy I was roused by a barber, who shaved me and combed my beard and moustache. When he had disappeared, my Arab returned, and to him I made signs that I desired to depart. He brought me my clothes, assisted me in dressing, and led me to the chamber opening on the vestibule, where I found my cloak. The cost of the whole entertainment, which lasted about three hours, was a piastre and a half, or about half a franc.”

From this digression I now return to the personal experience of the excellent Yusuf.

“Your Highnesses,” he continued, “have never had the opportunity, of course, of visiting a public bath, and as you might be interested in some account of such a place of resort, and all are tolerably similar in their arrangement and appointments, I will venture to give you my own description.

“At the entrance of the bath was collected a vast concourse not only of men, but of women also, although this establishment was intended only for the male sex—a fact which might be evidenced at once in the interior by the absence of those pieces of white linen or cotton which are hung up when the baths are appropriated to females. But such a spot is, in truth, the invariable market for all the scandalous gossip of the day. It is here that those assiduous newsmongers, the barbers, invariably assemble every morning. This is the lounge of all the lovers of gossip, Turks,

Egyptians, or Arabs, kaymakams of the Viceroy or Kislar Agacis of the great harems. It is here that swarm the holiday-makers so densely as would the Frenks in the gay city of Paris, on the days of their *fetes* and public fantasias.

“A piece of tapestry formed the door of this hamman. Close to it was squatted the owner, having on one side the cash-box into which he dropped the para handed him by his visitors, and on the other a wooden box with numerous compartments, in which he deposited all the valuables, such as jewels, money, or watches, committed to his charge. Around this vestibule were raised galleries (reached by wooden staircases), on which were ranged iron couches occupied by the individuals who had already undergone the luxurious operation of the bath, all well wrapped in thick cloths. Some were sipping coffee, or drinking cooling sherbet, and smoking pipes; others dozed in semi-sleep, some slept entirely. In the centre of the marble floor was a fountain spurting aloft its pleasant waters, around which were thickly grouped pots of various odoriferous plants. From the ceiling were suspended long cloths of various colours, as I have seen captured flags in the military establishments of Europe. Clouds of heated vapour issued from the interstices in the marble slabs, from a furnace perpetually burning beneath. At a little distance from the fountain, beneath a dimly lighted cupola of green glass, stood several marble slabs. You, Khanoum Effendem, would probably have likened them to the ancient tombstones which I have seen in the interiors of your great Frenk mosques; but

instead of being tenanted by warriors and grandees in sculptured effigy, as with you, they served as supports to living human beings who were undergoing the usual process of the bath. They were pinched, rubbed, and kneaded, previously to being frictionised by the *tellak* (shampooer), with his camels'-hair gloves. Then they were rinsed with warm, or I might say boiling water—then polished from head to foot with the naked hand—then rinsed once more with hot water and scrubbed with balls of hemp and lathered with soap—then, after their heads had been well cleansed by a careful parting of the hair, rinsed for the third time. After this last operation they were enveloped in dry linen and conveyed to their destined beds, in which after undergoing another good kneading, they were left to enjoy the refreshments provided.

“To those who are unaccustomed to the interior of a great bath the sight must be as interesting as it is picturesque. Not less, however, was that which was passing without. On issuing from the bath and awaiting my companions, I leaned my back against the pillar nearest to the tapestried entrance of the hammán, and used my powers of observation on all around me. One of the objects, which peculiarly fixed my attention was a group of Frenks standing, cigar in mouth, and looking with puzzled wonderment on the various Orientals passing to and fro, or lounging around; the variety of the picturesque costumes seemed to bewilder them; whilst the carriage and bearing of most of the men evidently perplexed the unbelievers in their efforts to understand to what grade of society each individual

might belong. To them the general aspect of the concourse around the hammán must have indeed been striking.

“Would that I could convey to your Highness even a faint idea of the scene which seemed to enthral the Frenk travellers. I am no apt scholar in Mahomedanism, as I fear you must have discovered; and any of my descriptions can only be faint as fleeting shadows. How can I give a picture of the gaudy dresses of the wealthy, contrasting with the foul rags of the bare-footed poor—the athletic sais running as fleetly as antelopes jostled against the crawling aged blind, or the scarcely tottering infants led by their mothers’ hands—the noble-looking, proud, and silent Bedouins shrouded in their *abbaihs* (hooded cloaks), hemmed in their stately path by camel-drivers with the cumbrous beast, shouting at the top of their voices ‘*Oá! guarda sakin!*’ (‘Take care!’); and these contrasting forms intermingled with the throng of the numerous vendors of sweetmeats, confectionery, kebabs, fruit, iced water, and sherbet, who were hawking their respective refreshments to the languid beings who issued from the bath? It was a scene far too confused and varied for my tongue.

“Close by stood a kahvené, before the entrance of which were seated many of those who had undergone the operations of the bath. The agile kahvedji was shuffling about giving his customers *bir-ateck* (fire or a light), and collecting as he passed the paras each customer had left for his findjan of coffee, as is the practice, on his vacated seat. I may here observe that it

is the custom of all consumers to bring their own cigars and cigarettes, and to fill their pipes from tobacco taken from their own pouches, inasmuch as the kahvedji is not, at the same time, by trade a *tutungji* (tobacconist).

“When our party had reassembled we all admitted that we were far too languid from the effects of the bath to continue immediately our perambulations about the streets, lanes, public places, bazaars, and markets of the city. We resolved, therefore, to enter the kahvené.

“It consisted of a saloon about ten feet long, with an arched ceiling. The whitewashed walls were encircled, to the height of about five feet, by wainscot boarding. In the centre stood a small white marble fountain spouting forth its streams and sprays of cool refreshing water. In one of the farther corners was a small furnace, on which stood several brass coffee-pots, each holding a findjan, for the cooking of the favourite beverage. Wooden shelves protruded from the walls for the purpose of holding razors, and dapper bright copper shaving basins, all of which stood symmetrically erect. Here and there were brass hooks, on which were hung small hand-mirrors, mounted in mother-of-pearl, for the convenience of any customer who was being shaved, and desired to see that his beard was trimmed according to his taste.

“Whilst here sitting, smoking, and sipping our coffee, a young man entered attired in the most orthodox Moslem costume. He called for his coffee and a light in the purest Arabic ; and as I overheard him casually inform the kahvedji that he was just arrived from Adán (Aden), I turned to him to beg for the latest news

from that place, where a war was then raging between the English and the Arabs. We conversed in Turkish, which I found he spoke like an Osmanlee. I was somewhat doubting of his real nationality, when a Mograbin, who sat doubled up next me on the divan—for be it known to you, Khanoum Effendem, that amongst us the beggar in rags may seat himself beside the most magnificently attired Moslem without any signs of displeasure and contempt on the part of the latter—leaned towards me, and whispered in my ear ‘*Ahseb brooa kelb el Nasrancee!*’ (‘Take care! he is a dog of a Christian!’). I started with surprise, unable to believe my ears, and looked again at the stranger. His attire, his bronzed countenance, his dialect, were all that of an Osmanlee. He lifted his findjan of fragrant Mocha to his lips, exclaiming ‘*Allah kereem!*’ and when we all responded, as was customary, ‘May it benefit!’ he repeated, in answer to our salutation, ‘May God benefit thee!’ as the most orthodox of Moslems. I wholly disbelieved the assertion of the mograbin; but a slight incident decided the truth. The stranger had sipped his coffee, and then he drank the glass of water which had been served him. Now, as all Orientals invariably swallow a *portion* of the glass of water to cool their throats before attacking the hot coffee, I knew at once by this trifling deviation from all rule, that, however perfect in other respects, in the character he had assumed, my man was only a masquerader and no true Mussulman.

“We all left the saloon at once, and seated ourselves, *al fresco*, on the benches outside. We were imme-

diately recompensed for the change we had made by the appearance of our old familiar friend, the proprietor of a *karagheuz* show (a mixture of 'Punch' and '*ombres chinoises*'), who took up his stand in front of the *kahvené*.

"The performance commenced. The scene represented was the Pacha's odalick. The first figure which appeared was that of a *hour*i in *yashmack* and *habarah*; and the airs and graces of the supposed odalisque immediately threw the crowd, which began to throng around the show, into a state of perfect ecstasy. This model of an Egyptian '*Light of the Harem*' then squatted herself on a *divan*, and several figures representing female slaves entered, and, kneeling before her, presented her with the usual refreshments. Having partaken of her coffee and confectionery, the odalisque arose, and, cigarette in mouth, leaned out of the window, from which the *mushrebééh*s had been taken away. The white *habarah* in which she was wrapped was gently removed, and two large black eyes with very black eyebrows were displayed to view. In the garden beneath now appeared several suitors, who serenaded the lovely *hour*i, accompanying themselves on the *guzla* (a species of native guitar). The love song was scarcely finished, when in stumbled several figures representing eunuchs, who, with *courbach*s in hand, belaboured the unlucky serenaders, and drove them out of the grounds. The odalisque hastily withdrew from the window, and her place was immediately supplied by a hideously ugly old crone, who closed the *mushrebééh*s.



“Presently the suitors reappeared, and the houri again took up her place behind the grated windows to watch the affected, languishing, and amorous gestures of her admirers below. But soon the old crone again appeared, drove away the curious odalisque, took up the place the houri had occupied, and, in a shrill falsetto voice (as it appeared), screeched out some lines of a favourite love song. At this supposed response to their passionate declarations, the suitors appeared as if demented with delight. Some of the figures rolled their heads like Chinese mandarins in porcelain, some rushed about like frantic maniacs, as if endeavouring to find out some means of overcoming such palpable obstacles as the ponderous bolts and thick iron gratings which intervened between themselves and the object of their passion. This comic scene not only excited the laughter and applause of the crowd, but greatly amused even myself and my companions.

“Another portion of the entertainment seemed now to begin. In the garden below appeared the figure of an elegant youth, attired in magnificent Nizam uniform, evidently intended to represent the ‘*Favoured One*.’ In his hand he held a sprig of basil. The *mushrebééh*s were now again drawn back, and the *Pearl of the Harem* once more leaned her head out of the window, and ventured to disclose her features to her lover. A little love-scene ensued. Then both the figures disappeared, and the window was again closed. Soon afterwards a body of slaves appeared, bearing trays covered with embroidered napkins, and evidently intended to represent costly presents, and likewise nuptial garments.

They entered the harem by the gate which, although guarded by two eunuchs, was left open for the entry of the procession. The lovers now appeared together, leaning out of the window; and the supposition naturally to be derived from this spectacle was, that the passion of the fond pair was to be crowned by a happy marriage.

“Your Highnesses who have seen similar performances in your own apartments, may well conceive how much comic drollery, as well as sentimental effect, was contrived to be produced by the acting of the figures. The dialogue also, spoken behind, was full of striking passages, pungent jokes, merry witticisms, and plays on words, of which the Europeans who were present could naturally not understand the full force, amused as they might be, at the same time, with the primitive nature of the representations of animals, furniture, or household accessories.

“In this performance followed ‘the nuptials of Karaghenz,’ a gross and indelicate fantasia, in which such license was given to language, that jocose allusions were even made to the subject of conjugal infidelity, a topic on which no raillery is permitted even in private intercourse. Over this piece of ribaldry I must needs draw a veil. The Cocona is a khanoum Ingleez; and I know that, in her country, not only are all obscene gestures and gross language prohibited in public representations, but any allusion to such subjects is looked on with much horror. Indeed, as I am aware, these Alla Franca khanoums consider as abominably indelicate such language, as all ladies of the harem are accustomed

to use among themselves with the greatest innocence and simplicity ; and even topics of conversation as are constantly carried on in the presence of his Highness the Viceroy without restraint, or thought of harm."

"*Taib! Taib! Mashallah! Mashallah, Yusuf!*" interrupted the Cocona. "I have had the opportunity, which no other European lady has ever enjoyed, of residing in the family circle of the Viceregal Mansion of Bliss, and I have had the rare privilege of being treated by your Highness as a sister, but still, unbeliever as I am, I have never been able to lose sight of the *Alla Franca* standard of propriety.

"I believe I am correct in saying, that the harem system did not prevail in the East until after the time of Abraham, and that, anterior to that age, there existed in Oriental countries as free an intercourse between the sexes as is now the case in Europe. The women in the days of that patriarch were as careless of wearing yashmacks in the presence of men as are the Bedouin women of the present century in appearing *unveiled* either before Moslems or unbelievers.

"Your Highnesses, like most other eastern houris, are essentially patterns of conjugal fidelity, as I well know ; but still I cannot but think, as, indeed, would all Europeans, that the indelicate language habitually used by ladies in the familiar intercourse of harem life is conducive to the most injurious effects. If, as in days of yore, Eastern women were allowed to hold more unrestricted intercourse with the better educated and more Europeanised among the Moslemah, I believe that this

tendency to use gross language would in all probability be considerably checked, if not totally eradicated.

“I have ventured to speak thus freely of your countrywomen, as your Highnesses have been equally as open on the subject of the manners of my own. Not long ago, I was amused by your informing me that you thought all European nations had slave-markets, and that you knew very well, that, in the very highest English society, *kutchuk khanoums* (young ladies), attended by their *ninas* (mothers), or *bruick khanoums* (chaperons), congregated at a public place, called ‘Almacks,’ where they danced before the men, like Almées in Egypt at fantasias, and were then sold to those who admired them the most, or made the highest bid for them. Your singular ideas were derogatory to my poor country-women, but they made me smile by their simplicity.

“Your Highnesses may have forgotten how I explained to you that the brightest flowers of our English grandees did indeed often come together in rooms appropriated to dancing, where, after being duly introduced in form by competent persons to noblemen and gentlemen of their own rank, they certainly did dance with, and not before them, provided their *ninas* or *bruick khanoums* gave their permission. I added, I remember, that it not unfrequently happened that marriages were afterwards celebrated between some of them and the noblemen or gentlemen with whom they had danced, not that they were sold as slaves. I will admit at the same time that the wealth and position of the

gentlemen dancers may frequently exercise a considerable influence on their ninas or bruick khanoums in facilitating or preventing such marriages, parents being naturally anxious to see their daughters make eligible matches. It would, in fact, appear most extraordinary to our young ladies to be brought up in harems, as in the East, and then given away in marriage to gentlemen whom they have *never* seen. With us, in England, an introduction first takes place between the young lady and gentleman; then follows a social intercourse, or courtship, during which both persons have an opportunity afforded them of becoming acquainted with each other; a privilege afforded to no khanoums or effendies in the East."

The ladies to whom my words were addressed shook their heads in silence. The information which I conveyed to these eastern houris relative to our European ladies and their marriages may be favourably contrasted here, perhaps, by such as I am able to give of Oriental customs on the subject of marriage to my English readers.

If the bridegroom presented to an Oriental bride, without ever having been previously seen, be good-natured, young, and passably good-looking, she requires no more. She well knows that her parents will allow none but a Mussulman to possess her. Should the husband take unto himself a second or even a third wife, she retains her priority in the harem, but no other privilege. Indeed, this priority she sacrifices without a murmur in favour of her husband's nina, whom she looks on as the real mistress of her home.

The regard paid to the mother-in-law is, in fact, one of the most amiable traits in the character of all Eastern women. If, as is not unfrequently the case, several of the slaves of the husband should become his concubines, strange to say, the wife or wives manifest no jealous misgivings; legally, they have no right to do so. The slaves more immediately belonging to the wife the husband cannot touch, under penalty of divorce. There is no doubt, however, even under these singular arrangements, that, if the husband be kind and considerate, and the wife should respond to his affectionate solicitude, the harem may prove an *earthly paradise*; and the wife's sole happiness and amusement are centred in the society of the father of her children and the *fantasias* which enliven her harem. Should evil tempers interfere, and domestic unhappiness run riot through the odalisk, the life becomes a very — place reverse of paradise. Should a Moslem believe that his wife has been unfaithful to him, he at once proclaims her shame to all the world. The Kadi pronounces the sentence of divorce. Still the husband is obliged to maintain the divorced woman until she contracts a new marriage. Any Moslemah may divorce his wife twice, and each time order her back again, whether the woman will or no. After a third divorce, he never can compel her to return against her own free will.

After the digression of the Cocona, relative to the freedom of language indulged in by Eastern ladies, and the consequent remarks relative to European manners, the Kislár Agaci continued the description of

his "*Reminiscences*," prefacing his narrative by the remark that the performances of his old favourite *karaghuez* were violently applauded by the spectators, without the slightest feeling that anything improper had been spoken or represented, and that he himself had bestowed his baksheesh without the faintest twinge of conscience on the subject.

"Having to take leave," he continued, "of an old woman named Omisah, who had formerly been a slave in the harem of her Highness, but emancipated on her marriage with one of the Viceregal gardeners, who was a Hadji, I took the opportunity to give my companions the pleasure of inspecting one of the old Mameluke palaces.

"The outer walls of this old building are marked with long deep red stripes, on which are traced, in Arabic characters, verses of the Koran, intended as marks of respect, to indicate that a pilgrim resided within those walls. On knocking at the door with my riding-whip, it was opened by the son of the woman I intended to visit, a very sickly-looking youth, about sixteen years of age. By him we were ushered into the court-yard, which is paved by very beautiful mosaics, and surrounded by a light and elegantly-constructed gallery. Thence we passed into the selamlick, all the reception-rooms of which are long and lofty. Here again the floors are paved with mosaics, and the windows ornamented with coloured glass, as are those which I have seen, Khanoum Effendem, in your great Frenk mosques. On all are inscribed in arabesque characters verses from the Koran. The ceilings are beautifully painted and

gilded, the colours and gold-work being still as fresh as in the long-past times when they were first laid on.

“The apartments of the odalisk are of that perfection of beauty that they are fully worthy of transportation to the most elegant of modern palaces. The *mushrebééh*s and lattice-work in general appear as though wrought by fairy hands. An air of unsymmetrical disorder seems to pervade the palace, however; for although each set of rooms has a certain unison, no especial plan of arrangement seems to have been adopted either by architect or decorator. Each artist seems to have executed his work according to his individual whim and caprice, and jumbled the most elaborate designs together. Presently we stumbled on several dark rooms, as sombre and grim as dungeons. Here the boy Hassan whispered to us that they were tenanted by djins, ghouls, afreets, and every other species of spiritual hobgoblin. I did not attempt to discredit the positive assertion of the *vallad* (boy). I knew, not only from hearsay, but from my own experience, how often similar dark nooks, in the ‘*Mansions of Bliss*’ on the Bosphorus, had been the scenes of hidden mysteries and fearful tragedies; and I felt that there were, probably, spectral influences enough in the memories of the past.

“Indeed, there was quite enough to startle superstitious minds in many parts of the vast old palace. Every now and then, falcons, hawks, and owls flitted across our path with sudden cries. On ascending to the terrace we scared from our path a host of reptiles. Vampire bats flew around us, shrieking forth sounds of



evil omen, and seemed as though they would have pounced on us, had we not switched our whips on all sides to keep them from our heads. An air of solitude and desertion hung over the whole building. From the terrace, however, we beheld a scene which fully repaid us for the toil of the ascent, and enthralled us as it burst on our sight. There lay the City of Victory, spread out like a map before us, on which a whole army of pigmy creatures, scarcely bigger than ants, was incessantly swarming. Hundreds of slender and ethereal *mááneh*s (minarets) reared their tapering heads aloft; and myriads of stately branches of the lofty Egyptian palms were waving to and fro under the breath of the gentle air. Beneath and around us, too, were some of the most striking and interesting of the country's antiquities; lofty hills, dilapidated forts, Coptic convents, poised, as it were, in the air on almost precipitous heights, thick masses of lovely gardens, from which peeped forth palms, sycamores, tamarinds, orange and banana trees, weighed down here and there with the precious loads of luscious fruit.

“*Ajaib! Ajaib!*” (‘Wonderful! Wonderful!’) ejaculated my companions, as they gazed with delight on the picturesque scene spread out before them. ‘*Taib! Taib!*’ I answered. ‘But you are only birds of passage—here to-day and gone to-morrow. All the wondrous scene before you looks to you, probably, like a terrestrial Eden of the Harem Paradise of the Prophet; but beneath the surface of this magic panorama of the land lie still, I warn you, many of the ancient

plagues of Egypt, and what is more, those moral plagues which persecute the land under the rule of that great sovereign *baksheesh*, before whom all alike, both high and low, bow down and worship.'

"As I thus moralised, a transformation had come over the aspect of the scene before us. The breeze had died away; the trees waved no more, but stood silently resigned under the scorching heat; streets, public places, and bazaars were deserted; and Egypt's capital looked to us, in this sudden change, more like a 'City of the Silent' than the abode of nearly two millions of human beings. We now descended from our lofty pinnacle of observation, and found Hassan writing at the bottom of the staircase. He offered to lead me to his mother. Again we passed through rooms where ancient and most reverend cobwebs hung in heavy festoons from the beams above. Here he once more informed us, with a whisper of dread, that *afreets* (evil spirits) roamed about at night in the rooms, with bathing clogs on their feet; and he picked up from the floor, and showed us pieces of charcoal, which he asserted had been deposited there by the evil spirits, to imply that the faces of himself and his mother should be blackened. Once more, the place was infested with insects of the vilest kind, among which the fleas were conspicuous by their enormous size; rats ran round the rooms as we passed along, squeaking and gibbering; and lizards, the most innocuous of all the reptile herd, darted hither and thither catching the flies, which swarmed throughout the entire space in myriads. The mosquitoes also became so troublesome that all were

anxious my visit should be hastened, and our departure made as soon as possible.

“At last my old friend Omisah appeared, overwhelming me with profuse thanks for the marked attention I had shown her by coming to say a last farewell to her before departing on my pilgrimage to El Hejaz. She had appeared *unveiled*, as she knew the privileged nature of her visitors; and I was thus able to look on those features which once had been so celebrated for their beauty. Some traces of her pristine charms were left, but they were few. She looked wan and aged now; and I felt pity for her. I handed her several purses of paras as baksheesh, which she received most gratefully, and then we hastily emerged from the court-yard accompanied by many a ‘*Bismillah*’ from Omisah.

“On leaving the deserted old Mameluke palace, our course led us past several houses, the outer walls of which were marked with long, deep, white stripes. These dwellings, as I explained to some of my companions who were unacquainted with the symbol, belonged to Hadjis who had made their full amount of pilgrimage. Another wall-painting, too, excited the attention and curiosity of some of my friends from Stamboul. This was a red and yellow circle, containing in its centre a representation of a cross, flanked by two burning tapers in large red design. ‘It is a relic of the Christian dogs of ancient times,’ I answered. I then expounded to them how, when Louis of France, the ninth king of that name, was taken prisoner at Damietta (1250) he left the sacred vessel of the *Frenks*,

which they call the Holy Sacrament, as hostage for his ransom, and marked the dwelling where it was deposited with these Christian symbols, which, although the many millions of money demanded as a ransom were paid, and the holy vessel redeemed, remain where they were painted, to this day.

“Our course now took us to a singular building, which my companions desired to inspect. It is supposed to be the very *oldest* habitation in Cairo, and bears the date of the ninth century of the *Hegira*. The whole quarter bore a very antiquated appearance. Close by the object of our visit stood a whole pile of tottering buildings, projecting in a manner so appalling, only supported by a column, that we could but look on the dwelling as of evil and unlucky omen, and turn from beneath its shadow. Many of the old domiciles around were lighted only with small air-holes barred with iron. Above the doors of some, which possessed beautifully sculptured archways, were hung wooden lamps; above others a *saber* (aloe plant), which has the peculiar property of driving away mosquitoes. Here, again, swung the stuffed skin of a dried crocodile, well secured with iron clasps, supposed by all Egyptians to be a sure *teleçem* against evil spirits. When this failed, an effigy or sculptured form of a crocodile—an animal which was actually worshipped by the ancient Egyptians, is still held in veneration as a sacred object—was attached to the entrance-doors as a talisman to ensure good fortune. You may smile, Khanoum Effendem”—this was addressed to the Cocona;—“but even in your *Frenk* nation, which you vaunt as so

enlightened, I have seen similar talismans attached to the doors of houses in the country in the shape of horse-shoes.

“Close by these primitive old houses was an ancient *hod* (watering-place for beasts), around which were grouped several of those ‘*ships of the desert*,’ the patient, much-enduring camels; they were drinking their fill from the stone troughs beneath the antique arched recesses, apparently wholly unmoved by the almost deafening howlings of the little Arab boys, who were repeating verses of the Koran, at the top of their voices, in the public school-rooms, built immediately over the arches of the *hod*.”

“*Taib! Taib!*” exclaimed the Cocona. “The noise of the little urchins was doubtless fearful. I have witnessed such scenes of uproar in the Arab day schools at Alexandria. Frequently, during my perambulations about that ancient capital of the haughty Cleopatra, I have stumbled on one of these Arab or Turkish seats of early learning, generally stowed away in some curious nook or corner. The room, which formed the whole of the academy, was generally so very small, that it was incomprehensible to me how so many little dots of humanity could be crammed, jammed, or packed into so confined a space. The manner in which they were ranged on forms, like plants on the stands of a conservatory, to vegetate in a perfectly tropical atmosphere, was always a matter of surprise to me. There they all squatted, holding in their little dirty hands square slabs of wood, on which were inscribed verses of the Koran, and these sentences they were all shouting

forth simultaneously, in the loudest possible tones of screeching energy, much as I have heard children singing hymns in village schools in my own country. If they emerged from their hot-house, after the conclusion of their class hours, it was always my great amusement to fling them a handful of paras, witness the scramble which ensued, and then see them rush off to the nearest *etmeckji's* and gratify their souls' delight by the purchase of pastry. Their chief delicacy was almost invariably greasy thin pancakes fried in oil; and the little reckless urchins looked to me like so many salamanders, as they tore the dainty morsels from the heated stove, doubled them together, whilst the burning oil ran down between their blistering fingers, and jerked them down their fire-proof throats."

"*Mashallah! Mashallah!*" exclaimed the Grand Pacha, laughing heartily and clapping his little hands with pleasure, at the picture sketched by his Cocona of Arab boys in the act of gormandising.

"Our next course," pursued the venerable Mohad-detyn, taking up the thread of his reminiscences, "was to that beautiful *sibeel* which was erected by Ismael Pacha, the great uncle of your Highness. It is a splendid specimen of Eastern architecture. The principal portion of the front is semicircular, and is chiefly ornamented by three brass latticed windows, within each of which is an exquisitely sculptured trough full of water. It is by passing the hand through one of the lower apertures of the grating, and dipping a brass mug, chained to the bars, into the trough, that the refreshing liquid is to be obtained.

Your compatriots, as I have learned, Khanoum Effendem, have, of late years, striven to imitate these beautiful and useful accessories of our Oriental cities by their drinking fountains, but imitated only at a humble distance. Here, too, above the lower portion of the *sibeel* was an open school for Arab children, supported by elegant black and white marble pillars."

The aged Yusuf paused once more in his description of the *Outer life* of Cairo; and the Grand Pacha, in whom the name of Ismael Pacha seemed to have aroused a train of thought, apart from the scenes conjured up before his eyes, suddenly exclaimed, "But how did my great uncle meet his death? I have never rightly understood."

"It is a sad story," replied the Kislär Agaci; "but since your Highness seems to wish that it should be related to you, if their Highnesses, the Princesses, think it proper, I will tell it."

"*Räiet muté chekkiriun*" ("I will thank you to do so"), said the Lady Paramount.

Thus encouraged, Yusuf paused for a moment to collect himself, and began.

## CHAPTER VII.

“KNOW, oh, beneficent Prince,” said the Mohaddety, “that some forty years gone by, or more, your illustrious great grandfather, Mahomet Ali, despatched an army, commanded by his second son, Ismael Pacha, the great uncle of your Highness, into Habeesh, on the borders of Abyssinia, for the purpose of claiming tribute and submission from all the neighbouring Princes of Berber, Dar-Shékeeh, Dongola, Shendy, Sermar, Kordofán, and other districts. On the arrival of his Highness at Shendy, he was received by Nemmin, the king of that country, surnamed *The Tiger*, with all the honours due to his rank, and waited on by that potentate, in his tent, to learn his pleasure. ‘I require you to furnish me with slaves, cattle, and a hundred thousand dollars,’ said your illustrious great uncle imperatively. ‘*Bosh! bosh!*’ replied the Tiger, Nemmin. ‘You must be joking! It would take me some hundreds of moons to satisfy your wishes.’ Ismael Pacha grew wrath at the insolent tone in which these words were spoken. ‘*Ha! Wallah! Ha! Wallah!*’ he exclaimed, and, with his pipe-stem, he smote the king a blow across his face. Concealing his anger, the Nubian monarch said, with imper-turbed coolness, ‘*Taib*. Let your Highness repose in peace. *To-morrow you shall have nothing more to ask.*’

“In the evening his Highness, Ismael Pacha, and his chief officers, sat before their tent, calmly smoking



their chibouques, and looking with complacency at the performances of some Nubian dancing girls, whom the Tiger had sent them for their delectation and amusement. While thus they sat, an immense pile of dried stacks of Indian corn began rapidly to arise around them. '*Ne var?*' ('What is this?'), inquired his Highness sharply, when he at last perceived the rising mound. 'Only forage for the horses of your Highness,' replied the Nubian monarch humbly. The dance went on. Suddenly the whole space became enveloped in clouds of smoke; the curtains of the tent shrivelled up in flames. The Pacha and his attendants endeavoured to dash through the funeral pyre, which blazed around them; a hundred *djerids* (javelins) drove them back into the burning circle. They implored mercy, but mercy there was none in the heart of the Tiger. The fiercest feelings of revenge had been aroused in the heart of the King of Shendy by the insult of that blow. He only yelled in triumph, and mingled his bursts of bitter mockery with the dying screams of Ismael Pacha. Thus perished miserably and ignominiously his Highness, your great uncle, and his officers. The Tiger retired to a distant lair, and thus escaped the rage of Mahomet Ali, who came down on the country, and laid waste, far and wide, the whole district surrounding that sad scene of treachery and death."

"*Way, way!*" ("Alas, alas!") "*Allah-il-Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah!*" exclaimed the little Prince, deeply affected by this disastrous history, and who has a mortal dread of both *real* and *stuffed* Tigers, as I have already described in "The English Governess in Egypt

and Turkey;" and "Way, way! Allah-il-Allah! Mahomet resoul Allah!" was echoed by all present.

"From the old quarter of Cairo, with its curious antiquated dwellings, we went on," pursued the Mohaddetyn, "to visit the Convent of Abbanilla. This is one of the most beautiful edifices belonging to that order of Dervishes, many of whom were about to accompany us on our pilgrimage to El Hejaz. The exterior of the edifice is tastefully ornamented with arabesques; and its copings are decorated with rows of elegant sculpture. In front plays a handsome fountain, the pious gift of some devout Moslem. The interior is entirely arranged in cells, lighted in their interior by mushrebéehs. The large gardens attached to the establishment are beautifully laid out. The banana, orange, pomegranate, and lemon trees, were almost breaking down with the weight of their luscious produce when we visited these gardens. The sight was never more gratified than by the graceful palms, on which hung great clusters of ripe fruit. The pith of this tree has a most delicious flavour, Khanoum Effendem. It is highly esteemed by all Moslems, who believe that the *first* tree of the kind came from El Hejaz, and that Allah has decreed to true believers the possession of all lands wherein the date-palm flourishes. It is the belief in this legend, probably, that has led to the spreading of Islamism over every country in which it grows. Another exquisite specimen of nature's beauty might have been found in the acacias, the feathering branches of which have been compared to the *beautiful* beard, worn by the illustrious great-grandfather of your

Highness, Mahomet Ali the Great. From the richly scented yellow and white blossoms of these lovely trees a perfume, called *fituch*, is extracted, Khanoum Effendem, which is most highly esteemed by the Egyptians. Around the trunks of all the taller trees were twined spreading vines, the grapes of which, however, have not, I admit, the luscious flavour of those which I have gathered in France and Italy: they are harder and more glutinous. The grounds are entirely arranged to admit of the customary mode of irrigation. The long parallel walks are flanked with stone trenches several feet deep, into which water is made to flow, and serve for the irrigation of the subdivided beds.

“The whole atmosphere was redolent with the perfume of roses, jasmins, violets, and gilliflowers of every colour. Palms, sycamores, and planes waved their heads dreamily above the prettily fashioned kiosks, in which the holy men were wont to take their *kef*, or smoke their chibouques, each with a small piece of opium, or quaff *bang* (an intoxicating drink made of hemp), or indulge in draughts of *boozeh* (a kind of beer), or sip that delicious sherbet, made of preserves of white mulberries and violets, sweetened with sugar, or even quaff that drink, bearing a strange resemblance to *nebeeth* (wine), prepared by placing dry grapes or dry dates in water to extract their sweetness, and then allowing the liquor slightly to ferment until it acquires a little pungency. The holy men assert this latter drink to be the nectar quaffed by the Prophet himself, and the great Caliph Hároun el Rasheed: it is sold in all Arab towns under the name of *zebeeb* (raisins).

“At the invitation of the holy men, my companions and myself entered several of their cells, the atmosphere of which was cool, and the appearance refreshing from the fact of their being skirted round with tiles of porcelain. They took great pride also in showing us a strange stone, encased in one of the doors of the convent, which is said to be an emerald, and is celebrated for its supposed magical properties. One of my *arkadash*, who had been accustomed, when at Stamboul, to pass much of his time among the jewel merchants, and traffic largely in all kinds of precious stones, and who might be supposed, consequently, to be an authority in judging such matters, declared to me that the enchanted emerald was nothing more than a piece of *green glass* bottle!

“I cannot but admit that these holy men, so much revered by the Cairenes, lead most idle and unprofitable lives. Many of the order at the time of our visit were strolling about the city. One of the brotherhood—more loquacious than the rest—informed me that they all performed that pious exercise of devotion, called ‘zikrs,’ every morning before sunrise and every evening at sunset; but that—with the exception of always turning the face towards Mekkah in praying—the mode in which the religious observance was gone through varied according to the order of the superior. Some sang—some howled—some twisted themselves into all kinds of imaginable or unimaginable contortions.”

“*Taib! Taib!*” interrupted the Cocona. “But it is not Dervishes alone who thus distort themselves. I myself have seen a devotee go through the strangest

posturings. He was the master of a kahvené. On commencing his prayers, he left his slippers behind him, and then began to display a flexibility of limb which was perfectly astonishing. He knelt, then rose, then sank again on his hands and knees, then touched the ground with his forehead, then rose again with nimbleness to commence his rapid genuflexions and prostrations all over again. To perform all these operations so deftly and nimbly must have been a work of considerable acrobatic difficulty. Your Highnesses will observe that Moslem and *Kelb Nasranee* kneel equally in prayer. I have seen also one of those 'accursed dogs,' an Asiatic Yahooodee, pray. It was one day at Galata. The manner in which he performed his devotions was singular enough. He fastened a little black box, containing a copy of his Koran—we call it '*the Bible*,' or the Book of books—round his grey head with a leathern strap, the end of which he wound round a finger of his left hand; he then threw a black and white covering over his head, stroked his snow-white beard, and put on his spectacles. Then he took out a book, from which he read his orisons in an under tone. The prayers completed, he kissed his book and the casket of his Bible, and put them carefully away. Thus, you observe, the Yahooodee, like the Nasranee, reads his devotional exercises from a book."

"*Mashallah! Mashallah!*" exclaimed their Highnesses in approbation of the remarks of the Cocona.

"Whilst in the convent," continued our Mohaddetyn, "we met the venerable dervish, Mourad Ali, who was about to accompany us to El Hejaz. He forthwith

joined our party, and we all went together to visit the *Sibeel Salah é-deen* (the fountain of Saladin). This monument consists of a very curious antique pillar, framed, as it were, in a marble niche. It is elaborately ornamented, and sculptured with numerous hieroglyphics.\* This fountain is not only looked upon by the Cairenes as an object of respect, but is even held in a kind of dread on account of the *unknown*, and in the eyes of many, magical characters, with which it is covered. There is a legend too, connected with the fountain to the effect, that its waters have the power of extinguishing the flames of the most violent passion, and quenching the intoxication of the heart. Both sexes drink deeply of them when they desire to wash away all traces of a luckless love. It is supposed that this source was well known to the old philosophers of Greece, but was shunned by them as displeasing to their deities, who, with Venus at their head, looked with angry eye on a fountain the waters of which tended to extinguish love, and to depopulate the earth.

“My friends then accompanied me to pay a visit to the Hakim Inglees who had frequently attended me when sick. As the interior of a *Frenk* dwelling in the midst of an Oriental city must necessarily be unknown to your Highnesses, a slight sketch of the Hakim’s dwelling may prove interesting to your curiosity. The house is situated at a short distance from the Eskebeeh, and, like most of the better houses in the Egyptian capital, is commodious and airy; to the latter good quality the open lattice woodwork windows materially contribute. On the basement floor

is a large courtyard surrounded by galleries, into which the various apartments open. This court is open to the sky. On this floor is a large apartment which serves as the selamlick, having a small fountain in the centre; then another room fitted up with an open fireplace in which a *mandal* (brazier) is placed, for burning charcoal in the cold season, the dormitory of the physician's assistant, the kitchen and the servant's apartments. On the right, as you enter from the street, is a wide flight of store stairs, leading to those apartments which, in an Eastern family, would constitute the odalick. Here the Hakim Bachi has his room of reception, called by him a '*drawing-room.*' The chambers, among which are an ante-room, bedroom, and bath-room, are paved with marble, and ventilated by an opening in the roof of the first of the suite, towards the north. The walls are whitewashed, the ceilings of exquisitely carved woodwork. In the second gallery above are likewise several *odas*, the largest of which opens on a terrace overlooking the neighbouring houses. The whole residence is elegantly furnished in Alla Franca style.

"The distinguished Hakim received us most politely, and had the customary refreshments handed to us in true Eastern fashion. On my taking leave of him he pressed on me *baksheesh*. This was a small but well-filled medicine chest, which afterwards proved of *invaluable* service to me, inasmuch as I was able, by the aid of some of the drugs contained in it, to save the life of a Pacha of note during my pilgrimage to Mekkah.

"Shortly after leaving the house of the Hakim our

path was crossed by one of those remarkable beings, the female fortune-tellers. These women in Egypt have no affinity whatever to the Zingari whom I have often seen in Stamboul. This one, with whom we stopped to have a gossip, was seated, as is the custom of her class, at a street corner, with a heap of small shells piled up before her. In answer to our inquiries, the soothsayeress explained to us that, when any individuals applied to her to have their future destiny expounded, she bade them fling a handful of these shells into the air, and then, according to the manner and form in which the shells fell littered on the ground, prognosticated their *kismet*.

“These fortune-tellers, as perhaps your Highnesses may have observed, are generally surrounded by a crowd of negresses, who throng around them in a circle. Indeed, the lower orders of Cairenes, be they of Arab, Fellah, Turkish, or Negro race, as firmly believe in the predictions of these women as they do in those of the Prophet Mahomet. They never take any step, however trivial, in life without consulting the arbitresses of their horoscopes, and as the cost of these mighty consultations never exceeds a few *paras*, the very poorest may contrive, under such auspices, to have a look into futurity.

“As usual, on returning to the more frequented streets, we found the common impediments in the way of our progress, and witnessed many of those contrasts which mark the *Out-door* life of the Egyptian capital. Now would dash by at a furious rate open carriages, in which were lolling and lounging Levantine and Wallachian women of questionable, or, I should say, un-



questionable character. Then would come past carriages, containing Moslem women, with their blue silk blinds carefully drawn down, attended by a street escort of eunuchs, armed with their badge of office, and sais, with thick sticks in hand clearing the way. Generally speaking, all vehicles, according to present fashion, are driven along at full speed. Fortunately the best Arab drivers are adroit, and, even in narrow *darbs*, the accidents which occur from furious driving are but few. Yet I remember on one occasion when the gallant Ibrahim Pacha, the grandfather of your Highness, was being hurriedly and recklessly driven through the streets of Cairo, to the terror and dismay of the scattered crowd, the wheels of his carriage passed over several of his Fellah subjects. A pious Moslemah even ventured to remonstrate with the sais, who were running at the top of their speed before the carriage to clear the road, on the dangerous driving of the Arab coachmen, but the only reply which was vouchsafed by the Viceregal outrunners was '*Malesch? Malesch?*' ('What matter? What matter?') 'There are a few Fellahs the less, Allah Kereem.' The same reproach might be made, however, to almost all the horsemen, whether Moslem or *Frenk*, who scour the streets of Cairo. Scarcely are the deafening shouts of '*Ruch! ruch!*' ('Get along! get along!') from sais who clear the path yelled into your bewildered ear, when the equestrians are on your body. Under such circumstances as these, we even found it difficult to exchange salutations with our friends among the Moslems of the upper classes whom we met, or when accosted by some

polite *Frenk* with a '*salam Aleikum,*' to reply, '*aleikum Salam,*' as common courtesy required.

"It took us a considerable time to escape from the many obstructions which thus hemmed our path in the more crowded portions of the city, and then we bent our steps more leisurely to the Harat-el-Yahoodi, the Jews' quarter of Cairo. Our inspection of this locality was necessarily but a hurried and slight one. We were soon glad to emerge once more from the filth and dirt with which the narrow alleys teemed. Narrow, however, as were these so-called thoroughfares, they are rendered narrower still by the heaps and mounds of fetid rubbish which are allowed to accumulate before the thresholds of the filthy dwellings. Room was scarcely left for the passage of two persons, and contagion lurked in every corner, and attended, like some invisible murderer, every step we took in this hideous abode of the diseased and unsightly descendants of the Israelites whose god is Sheitan, and whose idol is gold. Yet I admit, Khanoum Effendem, that this abominable quarter is not so bad in Cairo as that vile cesspool which you have already described—the Balata of Constantinople.

"Glad enough we were, as I have said, to escape from the Harat-el-Yahoodi without having experienced any disastrous consequences from the gratification of our curiosity. The next object of our perambulations was the Mooskee, where some of my companions were anxious to look at the shops fitted up *Alla Franca* fashion. Many of the windows of the establishments in this quarter, indeed, display as fine a show of miscellaneous

European and Asiatic commodities as I have seen myself set forth in the shops and magazines of London or of Paris; but, sooth to say, the articles so temptingly laid out to lure the passing purchasers were nearly *four* times more highly priced in the Egyptian city than in the *Frenk* capitals.

“The day was now fast waning to a close, and, as my *arkadash* were anxious to reach their quarters, if possible, before the hour when each Moslem is bound to bend the knee in prayer, with his face turned towards the shrine of Mekkah, we hurried on to the extremity of the Mooskee. Here the sais of my companions had been already appointed to meet them with their Arab horses,—so they took their leave of me, mounted, and rode away to their respective ‘*Mansions of Bliss*,’ heartily tired out, I doubt not, with our lengthened perambulations.

“As for myself, I turned into a French *café*, where, as the sun was setting, I was able to repeat my *namaz*. This duly completed, I remained some time sipping my findjans of coffee and smoking my cigarettes, in order still to enjoy my favourite occupation of observing men and manners as they appeared before me. I had just laid down the newspaper called ‘*L’Egypte*,’ which my knowledge of the French language enabled me to peruse, when the establishment was entered by a man, who forthwith attracted my attention by his bustling and important air. He was an European of middle age, and his hair was as white as the white cravat which encircled his stiff neck. The suit of clothes he wore was evidently antiquated, nor was its want of

lustre in any way increased by the contrast of the many orders and decorations with which the worn button-holes were adorned. The first action of this individual was to collect before him, on his little table, every European newspaper, belonging to the *Frenk kahvené*, which came within his clutches. In a little time he had piled before him a whole mass of French, English, German, and Italian papers—in short, almost every European gazette which could be found in the establishment. On the top of this pile he laid the paper called ‘*The Levant Herald*,’ and this he commenced perusing most attentively. Curious to test the character of the man, I endeavoured to draw one of the papers from his little pyramid towards me, apologising at the same time for the liberty I was taking. But he darted at me an indignant glance, and hugged his papers in his arms. ‘I am just finishing *The Levant Herald*,’ he said; ‘you shall have that when I have done with it.’ I only smiled. After a few moments my complacency seemed to have mollified his ill-humour, if it did not overcome his selfishness. He handed me over the journal he had been reading, and even condescended in this action to make the *temena*.

“Presently my unknown acquaintance sprang up from his chair at the sound of the wheels of a carriage, with an air of considerable animation. ‘*Les voilà! les voilà!*’ he exclaimed in French, and as if determined to make me share his excitement, he kept repeating his words with outstretched pointing finger, until I too had looked out at the passing carriage. It contained a collection of *almées* (dancing-girls). Not

wishing that the occupants of the *kahvené*, who were all foreigners, should know that I understood the French language, I merely said, without giving more than a glance at the occupants of the carriage, '*Né effendi?*' ('What, sir?') My loquacious and evidently excitable companion, who I could but fancy must have had some few grains of madness in the composition of his temperament, looked around, and seeing no other Oriental visitors present, beckoned me towards him, whispering, in a mysterious manner, '*Bir az yâklachen sizé déyégék bir seuzum var.*' ('Come closer; I have something to tell you.')

"Having finished my cigarette, I quitted my place and moved up into the corner close to him. '*Bir Atech! Bir Atech!*' I called, handing at the same time my cigarette-case to this most singular, middle-aged gentleman. The *garçon* responded to my call and brought us lights; and then, in obedience to my commands, glasses of iced sherbet. Our cigarettes once lighted, my strange acquaintance, with an evident disposition to become all on a sudden extremely confidential, placed one of his fingers on his lips and exclaimed, '*Diynéyin!*' ('Listen!') He prefaced the communication he was about to make by informing me that he was going to relate to me, in the strictest confidence, his adventures on the shores of the Bosphorus. I may as well here state that I afterwards discovered the name of my extraordinary companion to be Signor Magrini.

"My parents, who lived at Valetta, in the island of Malta,' he began, 'on perceiving that I was determined

to remain away from home, positively declined to afford me any further assistance, or to furnish me with any funds whatever for a more protracted sojourn at Stamboul, where I had taken up my quarters. This cruel refusal obliged me to seek employment in some commercial house at Galata, and I accepted the situation of book-keeper in the establishment of a rich Armenian jeweller.

“ ‘ One day there entered into the shop several veiled females, attended by eunuchs, wearing the badges of a Turkish prince. At the period of which I speak most of the houris belonging to the royal ‘ *Mansions of Bliss* ’ enjoyed the liberty of being allowed to go out to make purchases in the French quarter of the city. One reason for this comparative freedom may be found in the fact that the penalty for showing any disrespect to these ladies was then so awfully severe that no one would ever have attempted to annoy them or to intrude on them—another, in the habit prevalent in those days of not looking on Christians, or indeed any unbelievers, as fellow-creatures. They were the days, indeed, when Christian ambassadors dined alone in the Seraglio, and when the Sultan inquired “ *Has the dog eaten?* ” to which the Grand Vizir replied “ *The dog has had his meal;* ” then they were dismissed from the presence, being made to believe by the interpreters that the forms employed on the occasion were strictly diplomatic and complimentary. The march of intellect, *Allah kereem*, has changed much of these olden customs.

“ ‘ Well, the appearance of the ladies who entered the establishment of my master, had nothing in their veiled and swaddled state to excite any admiration or

even peculiar attention. The one who seemed to be of the highest rank, to judge from the extreme deference shown to her by her attendants, inspected several sets of jewellery. She had selected the ornaments which most pleased her taste, and was about to take them away with her, when I remarked that the mountings required cleaning, and that here and there a few small stones were wanting. "I require them," she said, "to wear at a *fantasia* given by the 'Deity of Islam,' at his summer palace at Ismid. When can I send for the jewels?" I made my temena several times, and with some hesitation replied that I could not exactly name the day when they would be ready. She looked around her as if afraid of being overheard, and then said to me with a low voice and confused air, "*Vakea! Bir yana koy ounda saïre kitablër*" ("Indeed! put them aside, and send them to me"), adding the address of the palace. "I will come myself, your Highness," I replied; "it would be impossible for me to entrust a set of jewels of this value to a mere clerk or to a slave." "*Taib! taib!*" muttered the lady hastily, "Bring them yourself, and you shall receive the paras."

"A glance of a woman's eye is far more expressive in the East than in any other country, from the very fact that the eye is the only feature of the face by which meaning can be conveyed. In Spain, where the females are wrapped in their mantillas, something of the same effect is produced by a mere look, but not by any means to the extent of the same flash of meaning as in Oriental countries. I could not help fancying that I perceived a very peculiar expression in the look of the

Princess I was serving—an expression which at once flattered and agitated me. This vanity was pardonable perhaps, in a young man of two-and-twenty, when he attributed this strange glance to his own good looks.’

“Thus saying, the Maltese bridled up, placed one hand on his hip, and stroked his moustaches with the other, whilst an air of conceit pervaded his whole face; and in truth I could not help thinking that with the advantages of youth on his side he might have been a very tolerable specimen of good-looking humanity.

“‘When the set of jewels was thoroughly cleaned and repaired,’ pursued my new acquaintance, after a pause of complacent attitudinising, ‘I repaired with it, in a caik, to the palace, which was situated on the shores of the Bosphorus. The caik was rowed to a small side door, at which I landed. I then passed through a spacious courtyard looking on the country, and entered the Eunuchs’ Hall, where I had to wait a considerable space of time. After a lapse of about half an hour I was ushered *blindfolded* into the presence of the Princess. I handed her the jewels with reverence, received the *paras* from her purse-bearer, and prepared to retire. At this moment a eunuch advanced and inquired of me whether I should not like to be present at a dancing *fantasia*, which was to be performed before her Highness the Egyptian Princess N—y. What could I do? I accepted the invitation.

“‘Refreshments were then served, and I found myself waited on by several female slaves, closely veiled. In the midst of all this strange attention I cannot say that I was very easy in my mind. I could not help thinking that this singular courtesy on the



part of her Highness, this dainty serving of the *odalisques* and *oustas* boded no good, and must needs lead to some catastrophe fatal to myself.

“Night came at last, when I made a peep-hole in my mask, and I was ushered into a richly decorated apartment. Here I found a goodly company assembled, consisting of several veiled ladies, who were being served with coffee, sweetmeats, confectionery, and chibouques. The modern innovation of cigarettes had not, in those days, been yet introduced into the “*Eastern Abodes of Bliss*.” In a lofty gallery surrounded by balustrades were seated a band of musicians, whose instruments consisted of tambourines, guzlas, hautboys, and drums. Presently the music commenced, and half a dozen girls began tumbling about in a very amusing fashion—dancing, their strange performance could not be called. Some Georgian women now entered and took their part in the entertainment. The dancing of these more expert females was of a far superior description, and they were evidently taking great pains to afford amusement and satisfaction to her Highness, their illustrious mistress, who during the whole of this *fantasia* remained in a reclining posture at the farther end of the room, without ever uttering one syllable.

“The silence of my strange hostess began to oppress me at last. I had not been long enough in Turkey to know what was the etiquette of the country, and I certainly was in no way able to understand that any timidity or studied reservedness could possibly prevent the Princess from holding converse with her guest, whose presence she had evidently sought. After some demurring with myself I came to the conclusion that it

was my duty to make her some advance. I rose, made my *temena*, moved towards the divan on which her Highness reclined, and raised the hem of her robe in my hand to express my obeisance and respect. It was at this very moment that a considerable confusion began to prevail. "The *eunuchs!* the *eunuchs!*" exclaimed some of the slaves in a tone of dismay. The eunuch who had previously conveyed to me the invitation of the Princess, and who was evidently a confidant in the secrets of his mistress, ran in, and after a brief and hurried colloquy with her Highness, which took place in a language I did not in the least comprehend—it may have been, it probably was, Abyssinian—made signs to me and to the bindfolded leader of the orchestra, who descended rapidly, being no doubt no more a Moslem than myself—and led us hastily down a flight of back stairs into a subterraneous room which had all the aspect of a dungeon. The door was closed on us.

"Soon we heard hurried footsteps and the heavy tread of men above our heads. Then came a sound as if of some desperate struggle, which made us shudder in every limb. Was some dreadful tragedy being, at that very moment, enacted over us? Presently, all was, as silent as the grave. After a time we heard the sound of steps approaching us, and six eunuchs entered our dungeon in evident consternation, exclaiming, "All is lost! all is lost! Come! come!" Two of them raised a trap in the centre of the room, and the four others, without further parley or explanation, pushed us down the aperture. All was intensely dark. I had expected to find steps by which to descend the

yawning abyss ; but to my horror, I found that we fell from a considerable height into water of some depth. The trap-door was immediately closed over our heads.

“At first my head whirled, and my mind was thoroughly confused. But, little by little, as I collected my scattered senses, I remembered that many of the palaces situated on the Bosphorus were built on piles. I had heard, too, that the lower rooms, situated immediately above the water, had frequently, in their cedar-plank flooring, a trap, moved by a spring, which permitted the *odalisques* of the harem to descend into a cold-water bath, constructed of marble, in the space beneath.

“It was evidently into one of these baths that myself and my unlucky companion had been plunged. To raise ourselves up again, and escape by the plank, which was closed over our heads, was clearly a matter of impossibility. As clear was it that we were caught like rats in a trap, or rather, in the present instance, immersed like kittens in a water-butt. As soon as I could gain my breath, I at first confined all my efforts to keep my footing firm and my head above water ; and this, in the darkness of our watery prison, was a matter of no little difficulty. Above us, we heard again the heavy tread of eunuchs, the clashing of swords, and the cracking of courbachs. My thoughts were now directed towards the possibility of finding some issue or some means of regaining the palace. I felt my way, as well as the water permitted, towards the sides of our prison. Suddenly the thought struck me that I might discover an outlet to the Bosphorus. The waters in

which we were immersed evidently flowed in from that river. I reached, at length, the utmost extent of the bath ; and on this side I found all egress stopped by a sort of grating of wooden trellised work piles. In all probability they had been placed there in order to prevent the odalisques, when bathing, from escaping from the palace, or even looking out beyond the bath.

“‘Soon another fearful thought came to increase the horrors of our position. I knew that the water must gradually rise in that almost imperceptible manner so peculiar to that sea, but at the sure rate of two feet in every sixty hours. Above, all retreat was cut off; below, was the gradually ascending water. To remain was certain death ; for in more or less time we should infallibly be drowned. I grappled with the piles, tried to shake them, tore at them with all the despairing strength of a doomed man. Near me I heard the panting breath and, now and then, the groans of my unfortunate companion, who, like myself, was endeavouring to find some means of escape. At length it seemed to me that one of the piles was not so firmly fixed as the others. I fancied it might yield if any great amount of pressure were to be brought to bear on it ; I hoped that it might be of older wood than those by its side, and rotted with the damp. All the muscular force I was able to exert was now concentrated on this pile. Could I believe my hopes ? It evidently shook,—it bent,—it snapped in twain. A space was gained, by which, thanks to my then slender form, I was able to emerge from that prison which might have been my watery grave. After a few more

struggles, I found myself swimming in the open Bosphorus ; my companion, too, had contrived to follow me. Before long we found ourselves close on a *caïk*. By the offer of a large remuneration, we induced the *caïkdji* to take us in his boat and row us to the *Scale of Top Hané*. Great was my joy to find myself once more at home !

“ ‘Scared at the dangers I had run, I resolved to quit Constantinople at once. I packed up all my worldly goods with the greatest expedition, and left by the first steamer for this land of sand and flies ! Here I have remained ever since ; and although I still carry on my old trade as jeweller, I take care never to venture to carry sets of jewels to *princesses* at their palaces. To this day I never can see a dancing girl without thinking, with a shudder, of that fatal *fantasia* and its awful consequences.’

“ Thus ended the strange story of Magrini Effendi. Spite of the wildness of manner and abruptness of my new acquaintance, there was something in his very eccentricities which induced me to think he might prove not only an agreeable, but a valuable companion, if I could persuade him to be my guide in making acquaintance with ‘*Life in Cairo by Night*.’ I was well aware that such a study afforded many objects of interest, and was likely to gratify a keen curiosity. Unlike the cities of the West, the Egyptian capital was not then, as it is now, lighted by gas. It was a dark picture, illuminated only by a few glimmering lamps and the paper lanterns lighted by feeble candles, with which human shadows moved fitfully about. It is one of the

regulations of the Egyptian Minister of Police, you must know, Khanoum Effendem, that every individual must carry a candle-lantern on going out by night, or cause one to be carried by a servant before him, on pain of being taken to the *Zaptieh* (police), and fined or imprisoned.

“I made the proposal to my strange friend to accompany me in a night ramble, and he assented with eagerness. We set out together. Darkness had fully set in by this time; so we provided ourselves with paper lanterns, with duly lighted candles, and thus armed according to law, we passed along the almost deserted streets. The *canasses* alone were patrolling in their new uniforms of dark granite-coloured cloaks with yellow facings, armed with swords (and now with revolvers) and courbachs.

“Smart though may be the appearance of the *canasses* in this attire, I cannot say much for their efficiency. Neither in Alexandria nor Cairo do they appear to any advantage either in a protective or detective capacity. Robberies and even assassinations are of frequent occurrence in both cities; although extra patrols have recently been established for the better security of the inhabitants. Noise enough they certainly make. The ears of the night-watchers are continually assailed by discordant cries, unearthly yells, I may call the sounds, of ‘*Gardai! Gardai!*’ from the patrol, responded to by approaching comrades with shouts of ‘*Wahed! Wahed!*’ and then the cue is caught up from watch to watch throughout the city. Satirists declare that these police officials have adopted these hideous noises simply as an efficient means of

keeping the members of the force when on duty in a state of wakefulness, and that this wise precaution is the only reason for a persistence in the barbaric custom of a barbaric age. There is no doubt that this intolerable bawling is a fearful nuisance; and it is a nuisance which might be easily obviated by making it a portion of the duties of the sergeant in command to visit the various watches during the night, and by punishing or dismissing the men if caught napping. As it is, the constant shouting from stentorian lungs during all the stillness of the night, is a matter of complaint from all whose slumbers are so rudely broken.

“Before proceeding very far on our ramble, we found ourselves before a *Zaptieh*. Bonavai Effendi, one of the police inspectors, was standing before it. Being a Maltese—a race, by the way, *utterly despised* by the Egyptians, and considered a discredit to their English masters—and thus a compatriot of my companion, he knew the eccentric being well. He politely asked us to enter the station-house, and had refreshments laid before us. In return, I opened my gold cigar-case, a present from his Highness the Viceroy, Abbas Pacha, and presented him with one of my choice ‘*Havanas*.’ A pleasant feeling was immediately established between us; and both the Maltese speedily became very communicative. The conversation naturally turned on the efficiency of the corps to which Bonavai Effendi belonged; and, certainly, the inspector showed a considerable degree of open candour.

“‘I will admit it,’ he said; ‘the body of men to which I am attached is in every respect *inefficient*.’

It is a notorious fact, that, whilst assassinations are constantly being committed, especially among the low Greek and Italian populations, and as constantly remaining unpunished, we inspectors are continually getting into trouble through the officious interference of our *carvasses* with the European residents in cases in which that interference is in no ways within their province. Most of my own official experience, however, was gained at Alexandria, and some of my reminiscences of matters which occurred during my term of duty there, I can relate to you while you finish your cigars.

“ ‘It is not so long ago that a lieutenant and surgeon of one of her Britannic Majesty’s ships of war, under some futile pretext of a fray, were robbed and maltreated by the *carvasses* themselves, the latter having one of his fingers very severely maimed in an attempt to steal his ring from off his hand. No compensation was ever offered, as far as I could discover, for this villainous outrage, and no redress obtained. Had the injured foreigner been a French subject, an important *diplomatic* affair would have been made out of the insult, plenty of *baksheesh* would have been obtained for the sufferer, and, at all events, the affair would never have been permitted to be hushed up, as it was.

“ ‘On another occasion, a young gentleman, attached to the British Consulate at Alexandria, the son of a retired commissariat officer in the service of her Majesty of England, who had done good service in the Crimean war, happened to be walking home one evening, just after nightfall, when he was pounced on by a *carvass*,



who accused him of not having a lighted lantern in his hand, according to strict police regulation. The appointed hour was not yet past. The young gentleman was immediately before his own door; it was opened, and he entered, at the same time most imprudently daring the *carass* to intrude into his dwelling, inasmuch as it is not permitted to the police to enter any *private* domicile of an European unless accompanied by a consulate officer. The speech which thus dared the official was unwarranted, it must be admitted. The policeman was goaded by the remark, and hastily summoned twenty other *carasses* to his aid. They burst into the house, seized the supposed delinquent, and dragged him through the streets to the *Zaptieh*, beating him by the way with their cudgels until he was nigh insensible. Fortunate it was for the poor fellow that the men were not armed, as now they are, with revolvers, which arms they are permitted to bear on account of a murderous attack made on the police near the Italian Consulate.

“One might naturally have thought that the “*Special Prince*,” to whose bureau the young official was attached, would have obtained immediate redress, and ample compensation for so unwarrantable an attack. Such, however, was not the result; and, as far as I have been able to learn, any proceedings which may have been taken in consequence are still in suspense, like many others which I could enumerate, were I so disposed. But to what purpose, my friends? The foreign consulates in Egypt, one and all, are *singular* institutions. Like many other official departments in the East, they require to be thoroughly reformed, as do your *Harems*

also, Kislar Agaci, before their Highnesses receive distinguished visitors within their precincts. The inertness and apparent apathetic indifference of the "*Special Prince*" of whom I have been speaking, may probably excite your surprise; and I see, my friend Magrini, by that curious twinkle in your eye, that you would like to know their secret mainspring. Well, I admit there is a little difficulty which prevents him from acting with the same decision and promptitude as the other "*Princes who govern Egypt.*" I have had a peep behind the scenes, and there I have been let into the mystery; but it is a *state* secret, and so I refrain from divulging it. But this one thing I know, and say, that had the young official who was thus grossly outraged been a subject of France or Italy, redress for the injury would have been obtained *within forty-eight hours*, or the flag of his "*Special Prince*" would have been hauled down.

"Not long since the French Consul General—when a provoked assault was made by the police and military on one of his fellow-countrymen—obtained *immediate* redress. On another occasion he even compelled his Highness the Viceroy Ismael Pacha, to come down from Cairo in order to witness, personally, the public degradation of an Egyptian officer, accused of having merely jostled a Zouave in the streets. On this occasion, at the express demand—I had almost said by the express command—of the "*Special Prince*" concerned, the Egyptian troops were drawn up in the square at Alexandria, the officer and two privates were publicly degraded, and a heavy compen-

sation was levied to appease the feelings of wounded honour in the insulted person. From this fact the inference may be drawn that the French Consul General is in possession of *some power* or other, by which he is enabled to obtain speedy and satisfactory reparation for his fellow-countrymen. There is no doubt, at the same time, that the French swarm in this country. On the Suez Canal works alone a vast number are engaged. I myself once heard a Frenchman boldly declare that the French cared little whether the Viceroy gave himself the trouble to redress their grievances or not, as they were quite strong enough to take matters into their own hands; and, for my own part, I entertain very little doubt that if the chief official of their country were not always to act with firmness and promptitude, they would not scruple so to do. Still, does it not appear singular to you, my friends, that such more than ample justice should have been meted out to a French Zouave, who had merely been jostled in the street, whilst British subjects cannot obtain the most scanty satisfaction? Is not the deduction to be drawn that the English are not accounted in *El Masr* as the equals of other foreigners?

“Much as my tongue is tied by my official position, there is one remark I need not scruple to make. From my own experience among Orientals, I have long since learned to know that in order to take the lead and hold their own, it is necessary that all European powers should select for their consular officers such individuals as are well versed in the Turkish and Arabic languages, have had experience in dealing with Asiatics, understand Oriental customs, and are able to assume a tone

of command by speaking to the Sovereigns to whom they are accredited in their own vernacular in this lax nineteenth century. It is impossible for them, at the same time, to advance in any step they may desire to take without a due propitiation of that mighty sovereign ruler of the East—the great “*Prince Bak-sheesh.*” This all-powerful ruler is, after Allah and Mahomet, the deity of the Oriental—you know it well, Kislar Agaci; and the European who will not subscribe to this great religion—all immaculate as he may be—can never be duly appreciated or even rightly understood.

“‘Without the requisites which I have mentioned, every European diplomatist residing at an Eastern court labours under the most *notable* disadvantages. On the one hand he is blind to the traps laid for him on every side; on the other he even plays—good, easy soul—into the hands of his astute antagonists, whilst the too-marked politeness with which he endeavours to propitiate is only interpreted by Orientals to mean, not affability, or even circumspection, but *fear.*”

“‘But I am wandering from my strictures on the very body to which I belong. Nothing can more fully show its present utter incompetency than the numerous robberies continually taking place by day, as well as night, especially at Alexandria. Some of these robberies are of the most daring description. Alexandria is noted as the resort of the refuse of all Europe—of men, in fact, who, driven from their own countries, are there allowed to revel in almost perfect lawlessness, and to become the scourge of all honest and peaceful beings.

“ ‘At the time that distinguished *Son of the People of the Books*, named Albany Fonblanque, was Legal Vice-Consul to her Britannic Majesty in Egypt, his residence was broken into by thieves ; and when he took energetic steps to punish the aggressors, his life was audaciously threatened by a band of the most dangerous among the foreign population of the country. The threat became known, and the doomed man was earnestly entreated by all his acquaintances never to walk abroad unless armed to the teeth. But the courageous English Vice-Consul was not so easily intimidated. “I carry a stout walking-stick, and that is quite enough for me,” he replied. “These good gentry had better know that they would act very unadvisedly in trying to get rid of me ; for, whatever may be my fate, my Government would only send among them a far severer judge.”

“ ‘Not long ago a Cephalonian, named Nicola Simato, a protected British subject, was seized at nightfall in the public streets by a Balak Bashi, named Zeibeh, assisted by two rascally *cavasses*, dragged by force from the main road into a narrow lane, and, after the infliction of two mortal wounds by a dagger, robbed of one hundred and twenty napoleons, twelve Turkish gold pieces, and thirty gold sequins. The British Legal Vice-Consul, on being made acquainted with this wretched affair, proceeded at once to the house of the dying man to receive his deposition. The thieves were eventually punished ; but the money, as far as I could learn, could never be recovered from the hands of those into whose possession it had fallen.

“ I remember also when the French post-office—then situated in a block of buildings in the Cleopatra Road almost opposite the English Consulate, but since removed to the Place des Consuls—was broken into, and robbed of two hundred and fifty francs, without any discovery of the marauders; whilst the same result attended the robberies committed about the same period in the offices of Messrs. Sinnot, Tedesco, and several other merchants.

“ ‘Where our own *caravasses* have failed, the energy of the British Legal Vice-Consul has been able to effect a considerable good, I must admit. Not long since, he sentenced four Maltese to three months’ imprisonment, for receiving stolen goods, knowing them to be stolen. I happened to be in court during the trial. The floor was covered from one end to the other with bales of cloth, pieces of various stuffs, ready-made trousers and waistcoats, neckties, pocket-handkerchiefs, and other sundry articles. Since the conviction of these receivers, who formed a portion of an organised gang, the burglaries, which up to that time had been matters of almost nightly occurrence, have been notably on the decline.

“ ‘An instance came under my own notice, not long ago, where the whole valuable stock of a rich jeweller was carried off, along with his English Chubb’s patent iron safe, which had actually been built into the wall of his private counting-house. The time selected for this audacious act was between the hours of one and three in the afternoon, when, owing to the heat, the Moslems take their siesta, the shops are closed, and business is

entirely suspended. The marauders, on this occasion, *never* were detected. My most sapient crew of *camasses* were totally at fault, and no better proof of their inefficiency and utter incapacity to watch over the safety of our motley population could have been given, than in this notorious depredation.

“A most singular abstraction of property lately took place in the house of a Greek, who died worth considerable wealth. Immediately after his demise everything of value was brought into *one* room. An inventory was taken by the Greek Consul. Among the articles was a strong box, containing valuables and cash, worth some hundred thousand of francs. The door of the apartment was fastened and sealed with the seals of the Consul and Greek Patriarch. The house was then occupied by *camasses* and watchmen, until the affairs of the estate were settled. On reopening the room, the seals were found intact, everything was apparently in perfect order. But on examination of the strong box, it was discovered that its contents had been extracted. How the feat was achieved remains a mystery to the present moment. There was but one window to the room, which was strongly secured by iron bars, and in this there was no appearance of any fracture or forced entrance.

“Any courage the *camasses* may show is generally displayed in their brutal violence towards the persons whom they arrest, not unfrequently for the most trivial infringements of the local laws, as I have already shown, and very often, moreover, without any ground of complaint whatever. An instance of their uncalled for

interference and senseless violence took place during the early part of the year 1864. A dispute somehow arose between some Arabs and donkey-boys, and some Italian sailors, belonging to an iron-clad steamer in the harbour. In this quarrel the *camasses* chose to take part against the Italians, whom they maltreated fearfully. The Italian Consul-General took up the matter immediately. The population of Italians domiciled in Alexandria is very large; nearly all the retail business of the European trade is in their hands; and, strange to say, considering the character usually borne by Italians for indolence, they are a most industrious *hard-working* community. The Italian Consul was thus soon backed by an assembly of upwards of fifteen thousand of his fellow-countrymen, to say nothing of the national iron-clad, and he demanded instant reparation in a most peremptory manner. The reparation was granted at once, and an apology was made at the same time by the Egyptian Government. All the police authorities implicated in the affair were dismissed, and the sentence of banishment—a punishment looked on with terror and awe—was pronounced on all the Arabs and donkey-boys concerned in the affray.

“The conduct of the Italian Consul-General in this instance is an example which, I can confess among ourselves, ought to be imitated by the Consular Agents of all other nations. Were they unanimously to adopt similar summary proceedings on the *spur* of the moment, and eschew all vacillation, they would place their own respective fellow-countrymen and themselves in a far better position, save his Highness the Viceroy and his



government an infinity of trouble, and eventually prevent the finances of the country from being frittered away in constant compensations to long standing foreign claimants. Procrastination and temporisation with either Egyptians or Turks, are simply folly, as you yourself well know, Kislár Agaci.

“I must admit, however, at the same time, that instances can be given in which the very contrary to what I have hitherto advanced has taken place, and the police have been obstructed in their best efforts to do their duty. It is not many months since that several pieces of cloth were stolen from a warehouse and traced into the possession of an Italian. A search warrant to examine his premises was demanded of the Italian Consulate by the police, and refused on the plea that the incriminated person was ‘*highly respectable.*’ Thus thwarted in their well-meant attempt, the local police issued a circular to all the Consul Generals, stating that, if search warrants were not granted under such suspicious circumstances, they would not be responsible for any future robberies which might be committed. A meeting of the Consuls was held; a consultation took place, and the Italian *Special Prince* was eventually obliged to yield to the pressure put on him by his colleagues. The search warrant *was* granted, and it was discovered that the “*highly respectable man*” had bought ten pieces of cloth from the thieves, paid six hundred and twenty francs for the whole lot, and sold two of them alone for a thousand. But nothing more was done against him. His “*respectability*” actually attended the British Consular Court,

when the case was tried, saw his rascally purveyors of stolen goods sentenced, and walked away unscathed, laughing in his sleeve, maybe, and blessing his stars that he was an *Italian subject*. In this latter self-congratulation he was, no doubt, right, for had he been a British subject he would indubitably have been placed in the dock, tried, and convicted of his grave offence. Justice is, most undoubtedly, impartially administered in the British Consular Court to all classes of persons without distinction. British subjects are amenable to any civil or criminal actions brought against them by natives or foreigners, and are treated with just severity if necessary ; and it is but fair, I must say, though it is far from being the case [as I have so often experienced in my own person], that British subjects should obtain equally *ample* satisfaction for any injuries sustained.

“ Since my appointment to this city I have made it my duty to keep an especially watchful eye on those outpourings of European scum, chiefly consisting of Greeks, Maltese, Levantines, and Italians, who prowl about the by-ways of the Egyptian capital, and who, in consequence of the culpable negligence and incapacity of my subordinates, very often succeed in reaping a golden harvest. These human locusts of the land are accustomed to retire after a time with their ill-gotten gains, as the chiefs of Italian banditti are said to do, and establish themselves at Constantinople, either with turban or fez on head, as very honourable Moslems, there to revel in their *otium cum dignitate*. It is generally about mid-day that these adroit fellows exercise their arts of unbolting and unbolting. At this hour counting-houses

and shops are invariably left to the sole charge of the more or less ingenious inventions of locksmiths; and however intricate on the one hand or massive on the other these supposed obstructions to robbery may be, they are far from being proof against the devices of men who have passed their lives in solving all the puzzles of bolt and ward.

“‘Robberies are not so frequent in the vicinity of the bazaars as might be imagined. The Oriental shop-keepers and merchants are here less open to depredation. They are very early risers. They unlock their alcoves at five in the morning, close them again from midday to three in the afternoon, and then re-open them until six in the evening. At this hour they generally shut up for the day. But their protection is double, for not only are their own massive iron-sheeted portals fastened with ponderous bolts and huge padlocks, but the entrances leading into the arched bazaars are all similarly provided with heavy defences.

“‘My friends, the *refuse* of all Europe generally confine themselves to more open places. They are fond of patronising the jewellers' shops, with an eye to the masses of set and uncut precious stones contained within. The display of diamonds, pearls, rubies, turquoises, and other precious stones of every description, made by the more wealthy jewellers, is very tempting, I must admit, although placed during the daytime, by a very wise precaution, under wire-work enclosures. Generally speaking, however, Oriental goldsmiths are ignorant of the art of setting out their wares to the best advantage, as the European dealer in precious stones so well

knows how to do; and strangers who at first do not notice any particular display, would be astounded to learn the immense amount of wealth stowed away in small wooden boxes, out of which the value of some millions of *paras* might be abstracted without any very sensible diminution. No wonder that these shops should have so great an attraction for fellows of nimble fingers, especially as great prizes may be carried off in a very minute compass.

“‘Whilst burglarious robberies are thus rife in both the great cities of Egypt, murders are also matters of frequent occurrence. Not long since a man of the name of Grego, who had assassinated one of his fellow-countrymen, was found, in his turn, at seven o’clock in the evening, dying in the street from a mortal wound. It never, however, transpired by whom he was murdered.

“‘Nothing gave me more trouble and anxiety when I was stationed at Alexandria than the low gambling dens. It was generally on the very threshold of these sinks of iniquity that most of the assassinations took place. Sailors of all nations, very few of them being English, were the usual victims. Most of the murders were obviously committed by unlucky gamblers, in order to repossess themselves of the money they had lost, or by desperadoes who watched the winners, and then took the earliest opportunity of stabbing them and rifling them of their gains. Owing to the praiseworthy exertions of the late British Legal Vice-Consul, Albany Fonblanque, these “*hells*,” as the English so curtly denominate them, have been suppressed; whilst

at the same time his Highness the Viceroy Ismael Pacha has actually gone to the length of expending a large sum in compensation to the proprietors of the gambling houses for the loss of their business.

“I have studied the subject of crime, criminals, and assassinations with much assiduity, and I have come to the conclusion that nothing would better tend to prevent the latter in Egypt so much as the appointment of “coroners,” according to the English mode of practice. In fact, it has always been a matter of much astonishment to me that our “*Eighteen other Princes who govern Egypt*” have never made any combined and strenuous efforts to have such officers appointed, in order, at least, that inquests might be held on the bodies of their unfortunate fellow-countrymen, who meet their deaths in such sudden and mysterious ways. Appointments of that nature I firmly believe would go far towards inducing his Highness the Viceroy to follow the laudable example set by the Sublime Porte. Last year the Turkish Government appointed a special commission for the reform of the Zaptieh, the utter inefficiency and corrupt state of the police force having become too patent and notorious; and this commission proposed that military discipline should be introduced into the corps, and that it would be *placed* on the same footing as the *gendarmerie* of France. Much of the obloquy which at present rests on the members of the police body, on account of their total ignorance of their real duties and their constant abuse of their power, might be removed by some reform of the kind.

“The laws by which the European populations of

his Highness's dominions are governed are so varied and complicated, that I should find it impossible to explain them to you, my good friends, with any succinctness, although I am convinced you can have but a very imperfect understanding of them. A few words of explanation might interest you, however. All foreigners are amenable to the jurisprudence of their own countries, the administration of which lies in the hands of their own *Special Prince*, in his own person. The English, however, form an exception; for them there exists a regularly constituted consular court, over which the British Legal Vice-Consul presides as judge.

“For my own part, I am of opinion that much trouble and annoyance might be spared to each *Special Prince*, were the Consular Agents of each nationality permitted, by their respective governments, to form themselves into a sort of *congress*, the sittings of which might be held at stated periods. In such assemblies all matters requiring stringent amendment might be discussed, according to the circumstances which occurred, and such regulations might be enacted as would serve to keep the various foreigners in order, and prevent them from coming, as is too often now the case, into *dangerous* collision with the local authorities. The formation of such a congress would, if its members would only bring themselves to yield a little deference to their respective national prejudices, and act in unison, prove a great boon, I am convinced, not only to the foreigners themselves, but to his Highness the Viceroy and the Egyptian Government, by saving

them from ever-recurring annoyances, and by sparing the Government finances—a matter of *infinitely* greater importance to Egypt.

“How often does it happen that a matter of the most trivial nature—such, for instance, as that mere jostling of a Zouave, just narrated—which might have been easily settled in an amicable manner by such a congress, is fanned by the *Special Prince* of any aggrieved individual into a serious dispute, and aggravated by vexatious delay and ever-increasing irritation on all sides, until the affair terminates at last (especially when the supposed injured nationality is backed by an iron-clad steamer in the harbour of Alexandria) in the settlement of the dispute at issue by the payment of a *heavy* compensation on the part of the Egyptian Government, and the *humiliation* of the Viceroy’s ministers, by their being compelled to tender apologies, and degrade or dismiss their subordinate officials—his Highness the Viceroy, be it understood, being almost always ignorant all the while of what is going on, or of the manner in which his officials have acted, for that Prince is proverbially desirous of avoiding all collision or dispute with his European population.

“It must be admitted that many of his Highness the Viceroy’s ministers have shown themselves anxious to remove all that is obnoxious in the present local laws, so as to render them more agreeable to the European populations on the one hand, and more efficient on the other; but in these laudable endeavours they have been constantly hampered and fettered by the

want of unanimity among those "eighteen other Princes who govern Egypt."

"The French *Special Prince* always acts with great firmness in supporting his fellow-countrymen, under all circumstances. I once heard the station-master at Cairo acknowledge to an English gentleman that he dared not restrain the outrageous conduct of a French postillion, who was raging about the platform because he could not get more than his due, and threatening all who came in his way with his whip, inasmuch as the offender was a *Frenchman*. Had the fellow been an Englishman, he would have been immediately sent before the British Consul: as a Frenchman, he was left untouched, for fear some wondrous *diplomatic* affair should be made out of the mere attempt to restrain him.

"At all events, the French nation has acquired a vast amount of respect in Egypt, and consequently a considerable influence. The almost daily occurrence of such incidents as that which I have just cited—the presence of a host of French overseers of public works, all *military* men of some standing—the habitual use of French money—the knowledge that the *Code Napoleon* is the ruling spirit of the Egyptian courts of justice—are all matters which lead to an impression on the minds of Egyptians, who never think of claiming their country as their own, that Egypt will one day belong to France; and this impression becomes already equivalent to partial conquest. To this general feeling, I must say in justice to the French, a considerable impulse is given by the



opening of that beneficent work, due to French enterprise, the *Fresh-water canal*—a work which considerably contributes to the respect acquired by France, in spite of the comparative failure of the other three great works carried out by French subjects. I allude to the railway from Cairo to Suez, which entails, I am given to understand, a heavy annual loss; the *Barage*, which is good for nothing; and the Suez Canal, which has as yet proved far from profitable either to the Egyptian Government or the people.

“A diplomatic struggle for supremacy is, in almost all countries, a very hazardous game. As played in this country the advantage has as yet fallen into French hands. Were it only for their own security, the English ought, doubtless, to be accounted the *equals* at least of all other foreign nations, and the French authority over the lines of transit obviously tends to the utter destruction of any such equality. In vain would the English *Special Prince* strive to be considered second to none. This is not the case now, and never will be, as long as his Highness the Viceroy is not only *hedged in* by a staff, the chief characteristics of which are mystery and endless intrigue, but by a legion of foreigners in every possible disguise—as long, indeed, as the Egyptian Government is swayed by masqueradings and *baksheesh*.’

“With these words the intelligent inspector, Bonavai Effendi, paused. I offered him the remaining contents of my cigar case, which he accepted with alacrity, and, thanking him for his kind attention and his valuable

information so freely and candidly bestowed, we salaamed, and left the *karakuin* (police-station).

“ We proceeded on our little expedition of nocturnal investigation, challenged now and then by the private watchmen standing at street corners armed with the neebest, who shouted out to us ‘ *Wahed! Wallah! Wallah!*’ Spite of the darkness, the scene around was not without its picturesque aspect. Sais were continually crossing our path with a flaring torch in one hand and a lantern in the other, as they flitted past in attendance on masters, some of whom were on horseback, some in carriages. Among others came by the Minister of Police, mounted on a magnificently caparisoned horse, with revolvers in his holsters, and accompanied by a numerous staff of inspectors; he was on his nightly rounds.

“ Now we found our way to one of the best frequented of those places of nocturnal resort which the French style ‘ *cafés chantants*’—a name which we ourselves have adopted. These places of amusement have sprung up in considerable number in latter years, and may be now found scattered in almost every nook and corner of Cairo and Alexandria. A great improvement has taken place in these establishments since the suppression of the gaming tables. When gambling was still permitted, the attendance of women of very questionable character was exceedingly great. These women—and I cannot exempt from them even those who displayed their accomplishments as vocalists in the concerts which then took place as now—displayed considerable aptitude

and ingenuity as well-trained gamblers, and cheated the foolish and unwary who fell into their hands with as much adroitness as ruthlessness. Until lately almost every species of gambling was carried on in these so-called '*singing*' establishments to a most alarming extent. Maybe means are found to evade the laws in secret even now. But formerly the misery entailed was great, and the evil cried loudly for a remedy. Salaried managers and cashiers of banks and mercantile firms, confidential clerks, tradespeople and their assistants were to be found, night after night, in these places, not only risking, and only too often losing, their own savings, but even jeopardising sums committed to their charge by their employers. Now, as I have just said, matters are much amended.

"We entered this *café chantant*, ordered some iced lemonade from one of the *garçons*, and whilst sipping that beverage and smoking our cigars we found an ample field for observation. The *café* was densely thronged. The greater number of the male visitors evidently consisted of the 'fast' of all ranks and grades of society in the capital. Levantine, Wallachian, French, and Italian women of questionable character were throwing out their lines on every side. The windows of the saloon attached to the establishment were thrown open, and the balcony which extended along the front of this large room was filled with groups, chatting, laughing, flirting, and at all events bent on the amusement of the hour. The scene was a busy and exciting one, and was accompanied by the performance of music in the orchestra, and occa-

sional singing of the professionals engaged on the platform.

“ We soon grew weary of the noise, both musical and vocal, and finding the atmosphere of the saloon oppressive from the oil lamps, we moved our chairs into a verandah looking down on the thoroughfare which skirted the *café*. Here again were groups of persons belonging to almost every European nationality seated on wire chairs with small iron tables before them, occupied with glasses of every imaginable species of beverage, and smoking every variety of cigar, cigarette, pipe, and narghilé, whilst enjoying the cool night air. Now and then the pleasant nocturnal panorama was diversified by the carriages of the upper classes among the European population of Cairo, as they rolled past from dinner or evening parties, or from the theatre, where Italian opera was being performed.

“ On leaving the *café*, and walking to the Eskebeëh, we found that locality thronged also by members of the upper classes, smoking, enjoying the cool breeze, or flitting in and out of the theatre. The scene was again both variegated and amusing. But as we moved away from the general place of rendezvous and resort in the large public square, we found a change in the gay scene, and a strange contrast was soon placed before our eyes. From light and gaiety we stumbled into darkness and misshapen dreariness. The canal was low. The ruins and mounds of rubbish on its banks looked desolate and almost spectral. The dark shapes of palaces reared their lofty roofs there, no doubt; but by their side were the dim forms of squalid mud-

hovels, and shadowy ghosts of poor Fellahs, clad in tatters, flickering the night air, were flitting fitfully and drearly around them. Kites and hawks whisked by us in the murky air, chasing their prey, and shrilly breaking the deep silence of the night, otherwise only disturbed by the distant moaning of some poor *harvagee*, who probably had been the victim of a nocturnal assassin. Around us flocked herds of miserable curs, prowling about in search of a supper, which they did not find.

“These wandering *kelbs* were less to be pitied, however, than might be imagined. They had been already served with their dinners in the daytime. Several artillerymen might have been seen, according to custom, passing along the Eskebeëh at an earlier hour, carrying—two by two—enormous cauldrons supported on poles, which they bore on their shoulders; and the whole conclave of *kelbs* might have been then heard to howl in frantic delight. Scarcely had these cauldrons been placed on the ground, than the hungry animals had rushed on them pell-mell to devour the contents; whilst the appointed guard was occupied in keeping them in some degree of order by means of their long poles. The provender supplied to the tribe of wandering dogs consists, I am told, of the scraps left by the soldiers, and is by no means such despicable food for a hungry cur, I am given to understand.”

“*Taib! Taib!*” exclaimed the Cocona. “I remember having been a witness to the scene you describe at Constantinople, where the Moslems seem to hold their erratic hounds in high esteem. The reason may be

found in the theory that the dogs devour all the offal which is cast into the streets. In India, stone troughs, filled with water, are placed for the convenience of these animals at the entrance of mosques and by the side of drinking fountains, although, perhaps, with a less reverential feeling. In many cities of Europe also, of late years, similar conveniences have been supplied to prevent dogs from falling into a rabid state during a season of heat and drought."

"This last scene," continued our Mohaddety, who now seemed wholly exhausted, "formed the termination of my wanderings that night. So thanking my new and singular acquaintance, Magrini Effendi, for his pleasant escort, I parted company with him, and returned weary to the palace."

As the Mohaddety paused, their Highnesses the Princesses expressed their great delight at the manner in which the varied scenes of El Kahirah life had been brought before them. They had already arranged to amuse the Grand Pacha and the whole of the company assembled by the performance of a dancing *fantasia*, and out of compliment to the aged Yusuf, their Highnesses requested him to remain and witness it.

The usual refreshments having been served, and cigarettes having been duly lighted by the host of gaudily-attired slaves, the Grand Eunuch Suleyman ordered his subordinates to usher in the Almées. The signal was given. First advanced a troop of eight girls, richly attired in blue Cashmere dresses, and wearing silver belts trimmed with deep silver fringe. Their vests also were decorated with silver buttons, and their loose trousers

were trimmed with broad silver lace. They immediately began their usual contortions, twisting themselves around most nimbly, throwing back their heads, and pirouetting in circles. Then they prostrated themselves before the Princesses, rolled their heads, and then, springing up with a sudden bound, stood motionless. In a few moments, however, they again commenced their movements, flitting round the vast reception-room like fairy sprites in one of our English extravaganzas, and finished this preliminary performance by twisting their white, gold-embroidered handkerchiefs in their henna-tipped tapering fingers under their arms and over their heads.

Now came a band of Egyptian musicians, with guzlas, tambourines, tars, taraboukas, and other native instruments. They played a variety of Egyptian, Turkish, and Abyssinian melodies with very considerable skill. After this performance entered four remarkably pretty Circassian girls, with their long, dark, glossy hair streaming dishevelled down their backs. They were attired in yellow Cashmere tight-fitting vests, wore gold belts, loose wide skirts and trousers trimmed with full deep bullion fringe. They, too, began a dance, which was admirably executed; and so energetic were they in their rapid evolutions, that they frequently left behind them their slippers, richly ornamented with precious stones. These offcasts were carefully taken up by the slaves, and by them replaced, when occasion offered, on their tiny feet.

This *fantasia* was brought to a close, very late in the evening, by the performance of two very handsome

Arab girls, each of which was looked on by the company as a first-rate *prima donna*. They possessed excellent voices, I must admit; and I was much charmed with one, who sang, in her full, rich voice, the "Bulbul of Shiraz," an English version of which song may be found in "The Poetry of the East."

When the whole proposed entertainment was concluded, refreshments were again handed round. The Princess Lady Paramount then clapped her hands. The Grand Eunuch Suleyman responded to the summons and advanced towards her, accompanied by a richly-attired female slave, who bore the cash-box of her Highness. This precious casket was covered with red velvet, and richly beset with diamonds. From her watch-chain her Highness detached a gold key, opened the box, took from it a quantity of *paras* in small gold and silver coins, and gave them to the Grand Eunuch to distribute among the Almées and Arab singing-girls. The *baksheesh* received, the fascinating crew performed the usual salutations and quitted the apartment.

A sign was then made to Suleyman by her Highness the third wife of the Viceroy. She ordered him, as he approached, to send one of his subordinates to fetch her jewel-box. It was soon brought on a gold salver, covered over with a pink kerchief, elaborately embroidered with gold stars and crescents, and trimmed with deep bullion fringe. When the kerchief was removed, an embossed silver casket, worked on light-blue velvet, was discovered. The slave who bore the salver knelt at the feet of her Highness, whose lady treasurer



opened the case with a gold key, handed to her by the Princess. From the contents the illustrious lady selected a gold watch, marking Turkish time, encrusted with diamonds, and a massive gold chain. These she directed the *ousta* to deliver to the Mohaddetyn, as *baksheesh* for the amiable manner in which he had contributed to amuse the family circle. Evidently delighted at the liberality and kind attention of her Highness, the venerable Yusuf made his *temena* and prepared to retire. He was recalled, however, by his Highness the Grand Pacha, who ordered him to be in attendance on the morrow, to continue his "*Reminiscences of Active Service.*"

Their Highnesses, with their attendant suites, had now dispersed, and the Grand Pacha Ibrahim and his Cocona soon retired to their respective chambers to court "*Nature's soft nurse.*"

END OF VOL. I.



1

2

3

4

5

6

7

8

9

10

11

12

13

14

15

16

17

18



